

AUGUST **A** 20¢

The Magazine Women Live By

# SECRETS

I was taught from childhood—

**SHARE A HUSBAND  
WITH OTHER WOMEN**

We Were Obeying the Law of Our Sect

**OPEN  
HOUSE  
FOR  
THE  
BOYS**

I Gave Wild Parties  
While My Mother  
Was Away

**THEY CALLED ME  
MRS. FANCYPANTS**

And My Husband Was Paying  
for My Swelled Head

**I WANTED MY FIRST WIFE BACK**  
My Second Wife Was Too Sexy



# "Don't let them call you SKINNY"

... advises Hollywood's  
Brightest New Star  
**JUNE WILKINSON,**

Co-starring in "THE CONTINENTAL TWIST"

STARRING LOUIS PRIMA

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*June Wilkinson*

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and  
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ON YOUR  
MONEY  
BACK**

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Palmer, Mass.

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NO PINS  
NO PADS  
NO POOR

# SECRETS

AUGUST, 1962

Vol. LII, Number 3

## BOOK-LENGTH SECRETS

## SECRETS FROM LIFE

## SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL LIVING

|  |    |
|--|----|
| I WANTED MY FIRST WIFE BACK.<br>My second wife was too sexy  | 8  |
| I was taught from childhood—<br>SHARE A HUSBAND WITH OTHER WOMEN.<br>We were obeying the law at our sect | 15 |
| "HE'S ALREADY RUINED YOUR LIFE ONCE!"<br>Everyone was afraid I'd let him do it again                     | 10 |
| THEY CALLED ME MRS. FANCYPANTS.<br>My husband was paying for my swelled head                             | 12 |
| OPEN HOUSE FOR THE BOYS.<br>I gave wild parties while my mother was away                                 | 16 |
| HE PICKED OUT A HUSBAND FOR ME.<br>Then kept us apart  | 18 |
| I HAD TO DELIVER MY OWN BABY!<br>There wasn't a soul to help me  | 20 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| FACT OR FICTION (A Poem) . . . by Suzanne Douglas  | 14 |
| IS MARRIAGE ON HIS MIND? . . . by Janet Hall       | 23 |
| LET COLOR DO SOMETHING FOR YOU by Diana Day        | 25 |
| HOW TO PREVENT VARICOSE VEINS<br>by Regina Foster  | 27 |
| REAL COOL DESSERTS AND DRINKS . . by Elsie Barton  | 29 |
| GOOD DISCIPLINE FOR YOUR CHILD by Alice Texter     | 31 |
| PATTERNS OF THE MONTH . . . . .                    | 32 |
| KEEPING UP WITH THE NEW . . . . .                  | 37 |
| NEEDLEWORK CORNER . . . . .                        | 41 |
| BRIDE'S HOUSE (A Poem) . . . . . by Pauline Booker | 47 |

Cover from Topic

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AND I WILL RUSH TO YOU...**

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☐ FACE

☐ FIGURE

☐ BOSOM

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## ☐ PERSONALITY

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Name

Address

City & Zone  State

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Here's where I want improvement:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve Bosom | <input type="checkbox"/> Slimmer Waist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More Shapely  | <input type="checkbox"/> More Charm    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legs & Thighs | <input type="checkbox"/> Make-up       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Add Weight    | <input type="checkbox"/> Complexion    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lose Weight   | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve Voice |



CARA had pulled up a chair in front of the window where the light was good and was plucking her eyebrows. They already looked perfect to me, but it was typical of Cara that she could spend hours working her face over. She glanced up as I came out of the bathroom freshly shaven.

"You look like a TV commercial for a razor company—very rugged and male," she observed, with a hot light in her eyes as they traveled over me.

I didn't say anything as I reached for my sports shirt. I like a compliment as well as the next guy, but not when it comes from Cara. There's only one thing she cares about in a man, and

*(Continued on page 44)*

# I WANTED MY FIRST WIFE BACK MY SECOND WIFE WAS TOO SEXY

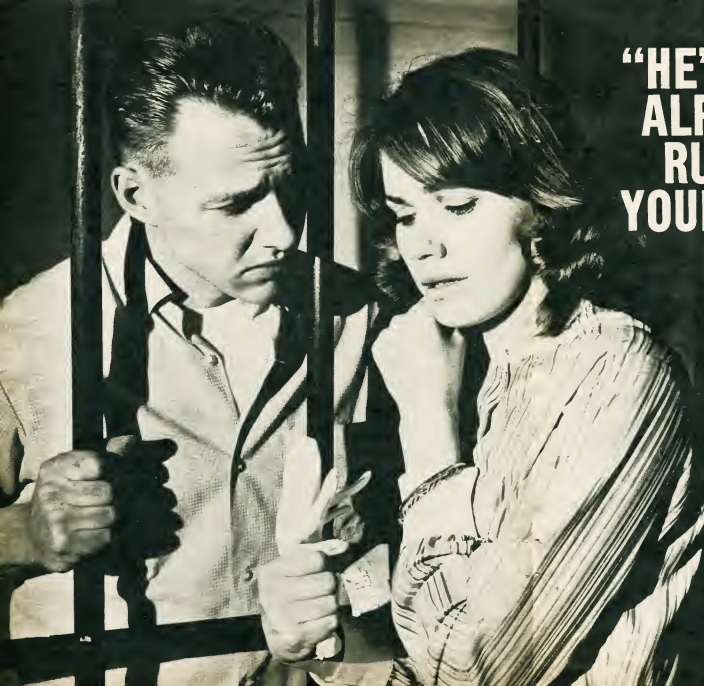


"Don't turn your back on me like I was a hug or something!" Cara yelled at me. "You think I don't know what's going on between you and that mousey ex-wife of yours?"

Every man who saw me with Cara thought, boy, is he lucky! Imagine having that to come home to every night! They didn't know I'd give anything to come home to a hot dinner and an easy chair and a plain, decent wife—not a woman who had just one thing on her mind

BOOK-  
LENGTH  
SECRET





**"HE'S  
ALREADY  
RUINED  
YOUR LIFE  
ONCE!"**

**Everyone  
Was  
Afraid  
I'd Let  
Him  
Do It  
Again**

"It's over for us, Lynn," Tommy answered when I cried that I loved him. "I want you to find someone else."

I'D THOUGHT I was perfectly happy that moment before my sister Laurie came bursting in with her news. With two words—"Tommy's back"—she shattered all my hard-earned contentment.

Mom and I had been addressing my wedding invitations that cold October afternoon. We'd set up the card table in front of the fireplace and were writing from the list and talking about my trousseau and the wedding and sipping coffee. It was cozy.

From the backyard we could hear the steady ping of bullets and an occasional explosion as my brother Rich would hit one of the tin cans on the fence. Grandpa was teaching Rich how to use the rifle he'd given him—over Mom's protests—on his fifteenth birthday two weeks before. Every once in a while she'd glance out toward them, wincing, sputtering about no good coming out of giving firearms to little boys.

But I only smiled. Rich was  
*(Continued on page 22)*

My family argued that Les could give me stability, security, and lifelong devotion—Tommy had nothing to offer but trouble and heartbreak. But Tommy had one thing Les didn't—Tommy had my heart

"Who needs them?" I thought every time the neighbors went away miffed at the way I'd struck it rich. But the time came when I found out who did need them—my husband—and it was my fault that not a soul was there to help us

Wes and I were overcome. "The two of you leave tomorrow, ten days in Florida—the trip's on me," Mr. Claidon said.

LIKE a lot of others, I guess, I'd had my daydreams of sudden good fortune coming my way. Some relative I'd never heard of leaving me a million dollars—The old oil stock that Dad had bought during the depression becoming more than just worthless sheets of paper I held onto only because there wasn't any point in throwing them away. You never know—When I'd tell Wes that, he'd laugh. Wes was the practical one in our marriage. The way he looked at it, you worked for every dime you got. He wasn't bitter or anything,

(Continued on page 14)

THEY CALLED ME  
MRS. FANCYPANTS  
And My Husband Was Paying for  
My Swelled Head

He just figured that was the way it was.

The way I figured it, if there's such a thing as bad luck, there should be such a thing as good luck. And Wes and I had had our share of bad luck. Our son Bruce had been born with a cleft palate, and it had taken a series of operations to remedy the defect. We were just pulling ourselves out of debt when our little girl, Michelle, got polio. That was before the Salk vaccine, and for months Wes and I lived in agony. First there was the fear of losing her. Then came the fear that she'd be crippled. There had been the expensive, painful braces, the long, weary trips to the physical therapy clinic.

The summer the last brace was removed, Wes's boss, Mr. Atkins, died. Ever since our marriage, Wes had worked in Mr. Atkins's grocery store. He had gradually moved up to running it on his own. He had dreamed of someday owning it. That was Wes's kind of dream—a sensible one that could be realized through your own effort.

We talked it over and shakily decided to take the plunge. We sold our house and used the seven hundred dollars equity as the down payment on the business. There were living quarters above the rented store. The rooms were dark and cramped, but they'd do for the time being. By the time the children were in their teens, we'd told ourselves, we'd have a really nice house out in the suburbs.

But Bruce was fourteen, and Michelle was twelve, and we were still living in the rooms above the grocery. We opened up the store at eight and closed at eleven, in order to get the after-movie trade. You'd think working those long hours, we would have been rich. But all we managed to do was get by. It seemed as if it was always something. Dad was in the hospital for three weeks before he died, and he wasn't the type who would ever have thought of hospitalization. Wes paid all the bills, including the funeral expenses, without a murmur. So when his brother Mac was out of work, I couldn't say anything about the whopping bill he ran up against us. I mean, his four kids had to eat, and although I thought that Mac's wife, Lorna, could have skipped the fancy canned goods and chocolate cookies and bananas, I kept my thoughts to myself. I wasn't going to have any fights over relatives. Besides, I got along fine with Lorna. She was plump and good-natured, and the evenings Wes went howling she'd come over and keep me company in the store. And I appreciated that, because I got nervous alone at night, what with all the small groceries constantly being robbed.

Sometimes Lorna and I would talk about what we'd do when we struck it rich. Lorna had her hopes pinned on winning the Irish sweepstakes, while I had mine pinned on that worthless old ice stock. But when luck did come, it came in a way I wouldn't have dreamed of in a thousand years.

IT WAS a bitter cold morning two days after Christmas. Wes and I were up at five in order to go to the market. Ordinarily I didn't go along

with him, but the previous evening Lorna had taken Michelle and Bruce home with her to spend a couple of days with her kids. Our crowded apartment had seemed almost spacious with the children gone. Wes and I had watched the Late Late Show on television, then gone to bed and made love. It seemed as if we had barely shut our eyes before we were up again, shivering in the bleak darkness.

I filled the thermos jug with hot coffee, and we were on our way. It was kind of exciting, being out so early and watching the street lights flicker out and the night-owl workers standing on lonely street corners. When your life stays the same, day after day and year after year, anything unusual can be exciting.

At seven-thirty we were on our way home again, our panel truck loaded with produce. I'd been up so long that it didn't seem possible that the city was

## FACT OR FICTION

Breathes there a man who  
always states  
The truth and never exaggerates.

Who doesn't embroider and  
doesn't embellish  
But sticks to the facts with  
evident relish?  
If such there be—and I ac-  
cent if,  
One hour with him would  
bore me stiff!

—Suzanne Douglass

just stirring to life. As we followed the lake road out to Fiftieth, I was thinking that the world was divided between the haves and the have-nots. We had seen middle-aged women hurrying through the cold to their factory jobs, while out here the wealthy people still slept in their warm mansions. I was pretending dreamily that I was a pampered rich woman, sleeping between silken sheets, when I saw the thin, dark plume of smoke coming from one of the big houses.

"Wes," I said, real soft and carefully—"We were on an icy stretch, and I didn't dare to startle him. 'Wes, you'd better pull over to the side and stop.'"

"Want to neck for a while?" He turned his head to grin at me, and his eyes caught on the plume of smoke. We didn't talk after that. Wes stopped the truck, and we were out of it, running across the road, our breath fogging in front of us. It wasn't until we reached the walk in front of the house that Wes spoke. "Go next door and call the fire department." He was racing up the wide stone steps while I ran on to the next mansion.

It's funny how you lose your awe of the rich in an emergency. I jammed my hand against the doorbell, and when at last the door opened, I plunged inside

without wondering about my clothes or my grammar or anything else. "Fire—next door!" I gasped. "Where's your phone?"

"Right here." A woman in a flannel robe, with her hair up in curlers, her eyes big with fright—

The next I knew, the room was full of people. A voice shrilling for someone to save her furs—A man saying for Heaven's sake to calm down—their house wasn't going to burn—

"It will spread!" the voice shrilled. I had gotten hold of the fire department. I whirled on the shrilling confusion around me and demanded the address. A man's hand grabbed the phone away from me. "Forty-eighth and Lake Boulevard. It looks like a bad one."

I could see the billowing smoke through the window, like black chiffon swirling around the gracefully dancing flames. Terror slapping me—Wes in there—

I raced back outside. A hedge separated the two houses. I had to go down the slippery steps, along the walk, then up the snow-covered slope—A woman came out the front door and put a baby in my arms. "She's wet," she said. "She needs changing." She turned and rushed back in.

I didn't want the baby. I wanted Wes. But you can't put a baby down on the packed snow. I carried her over to the house I had just left. The dayenport was piled high with furs. I pushed them on the floor, laid the baby down. "Somebody watch her," I said. "I have to go to back—"

Back to Wes—Into the flames if necessary, but I had to get to Wes. But I couldn't run any more. My legs seemed frozen. I walked wodenly down the steps, along the walk, up the snow-covered slope—Doing the same thing over, like in a nightmare—the pierce of a siren—I stumbled up to the house. The woman again, yanking at the hand of a crying little boy—And Wes, pushing a bigger boy ahead of him. "All of them out?" He was asking the woman.

"Yes. I have three. Two boys and a girl." She looked at me with glazed eyes. Then she crumpled to the ground. Firemen were coming at us—Wes was explaining that everyone was out—Telling me to take the kids, he'd take care of the woman. I obeyed mechanically, wondering if the boys would catch cold in their bare feet. I led them to the house next door, where I had pushed all the furs onto the floor.

THEN I WAS in an enormous kitchen drinking coffee, while the woman in flannel robe and curlers was saying for us to wait for breakfast. I looked inquiringly at Wes. It wasn't every day we had a chance to eat breakfast in a place like this. But he was shaking his head. "Thanks, but we have to run along. Everything's under control."

We were on our way out when a young man demanded our names and address. Wes told him. "How did you and your wife happen to spot the fire, Mr. Ballard?"

"We were on our way home from the market—" Wes was pushing past  
(Continued on page 34)

BOOK-  
LENGTH  
SECRET

I was taught from childhood—

# SHARE A HUSBAND WITH OTHER WOMEN

We Were  
Obeying the  
Law of Our Sect



MY FRIENDS and neighbors think of me as an ordinary, happily married young woman. They see our modest little home, my husband who makes us a comfortable living, my darling baby boy, and they think I'm just another happy young wife. Why wouldn't they? What more could a woman ask?

What they can't see are the scars of the past burned deeply on my heart.

My husband understands. He tells me that the past is over and that we should look to the future for our happiness.

According to my childhood teachings, I have blackened my soul with sin. I have forever given up my chance to wear pure

(Continued on page 50)

You outsiders can't imagine the strange life we led in our religious sect—men with many wives, children with part-time fathers, and every girl brought up to believe it was her glory to have babies, whether or not she was legally married!

THE real loneliness didn't begin till Mom went on night shift as cashier at a big downtown restaurant. I'd always been a little lonely, because, with Daddy sick for a long time and Mom working, our home was always quiet. I couldn't have kids in, and toward the end most of our friends dropped away. Five years is a long time to be sick.

I guess some people even felt horrified to see a person suffer and fade away the way Daddy did. I never felt that way. As long as he was in the house, I felt I had a real home. I was ten when he got sick and Mom had to go to work. I was glad I was old enough to keep him company and help take care of him. I was proud to help Mom with the housekeeping.

Then I was fifteen, and Daddy was gone. All I had to look forward to then was Mom coming home from work. We lived in a small cottage just inside the city limits. It was a

(Continued on page 38)

"We're gonna have a party!  
We're gonna have a party!"  
all the kids cheered. I was  
too surprised to move.

Other girls had terrific looks. Other girls had a terrific line. But I had something none of the other girls had—a home with only me in it, a home without a chaperon in sight—and I used it to make myself the most sought-after girl in school!

# OPEN HOUSE FOR THE BOYS

## I Gave Wild Parties While My Mother Was Away







Those moments in Gunner's arms were filled with such sweetness, such happiness. How wonderful it was to know that he was in love with me!

It wasn't me my father was happy for at my wedding—it was for himself. Because to him my marriage meant he was finally getting what he'd always wanted—a son. A son—my husband—that he could completely take over!

## HE PICKED OUT a HUSBAND FOR ME

### Then Kept Us Apart

THERE aren't too many things in life that aren't worth fighting for—if you want them badly enough! Some of us take a long time to learn that, even when those things mean our happiness.

Life, too, would be easier if people weren't just as they are. Now, you take Pop. Pop was a mighty big, strong man. That's what made it so hard for him—having just Millie and me, that is. Pop loved Mom,

*(Continued on page 62)*

**R**EMEMBER the terrible Midwestern spring floods that swept this part of the country? Believe me, I'll never forget them, because it was due to the angry, fast-rising water of the White River that I was forced to deliver my own baby—alone and without help.

If anybody had told me, while I was carrying our second child, that I'd be stuck alone in a farmhouse, with rising, muddy water just outside my window, and my baby coming fast, I'd have been horrified. Now, as I look back on it, I can honestly say that three things saved my baby's life and my own when I was forced to deliver my own child—knowledge, instinct, and the blessing of a normal birth. If my baby had been breech, or if I'd hemorrhaged, probably both the baby and I would have died. That's why it's so important to go to a hospital to have your baby—you may not be as lucky as I was.

Cort, my husband, had begged me to go to his sister's in town a few days before our baby was due. I let him take Cathy, our three-year-old daughter in, but I

*(Continued on page 30)*



*God help me, I prayed. Give me the strength to bring my baby into the world safely!*

**As the labor pains grew closer and closer, I hurried to gather everything I'd need. But I wasn't packing a suitcase, like the first time I'd had a baby. I wasn't getting ready to go to the hospital. I was gathering together everything I'd need to give birth—**

**I HAD TO  
DELIVER  
MY OWN  
BABY!**

## "He's Already Ruined Your Life Once!"

(Continued from page 11)

her youngest, and she wouldn't see how fast he was growing up. Besides, I was feeling too peaceful to get into the argument. I had my life under control again. I was going to marry Les Carter next month, and everything was going to be wonderful—no storms and scenes, no more heartache, no more fearful wondering what was going to happen next. No more loneliness!

And then Laurie came in, leading little Robin by the hand, in a big, tearing rush because she was on her way to pick up Sandy at kindergarten. "Don't get up, Mom," she said. "I just came to borrow the big percolator."

Mom pulled Robin onto her lap while Nancy disappeared into the kitchen. Then she was back. "So the big event is getting under way," she said, glancing at the thick, engraved invitations. She looked down at me, her eyes softening. "I'm glad you're marrying Les, Lynn." She hesitated, then added, "You knew Tommy was back, didn't you?"

I heard Mom's sharp gasp. And I heard another fainter sound. I think it was my heart turning over.

Mom said warningly, "Lynn doesn't care where he is, Laurie. She has other, more important things on her mind."

And then I knew she'd known, too. Probably everyone had known except me. Tommy had gotten his parole this time, then. Tommy was back.

I tried to sound flippant. "Maybe I'll have better luck with November wedding plans than I did with the June ones." But the words came out bitter sounding.

Laurie laughed uncomfortably. "It isn't the month, sis," she said. "It's the man. And you're marrying a prince."

She and Robin left then, and Mom went to the kitchen to get dinner started.

And I thought about the other wedding invitations two and a half years ago—invitations that had already been mailed—invitations that were called off—invitations that read, "Mr. and Mrs. Walter Atwell request the honour of your presence at the marriage of their daughter, Lynn Anne, to Mr. Thomas Jerome Wright—"

The vision rose up before me like a ghost. Tommy, with his unruly mop of blond curls and blue eyes that could be stormy or devilish or dreamy or soft with love. Tommy, with his lean, strong, graceful body and his deep, drawl voice saying, "I could never love anybody but you, Lynn. You know that."

I stared vacantly at the invitations, and suddenly it was all spoiled. I wasn't sure any more. I'd loved Tommy so long. He'd filled such a big part of my life.

Even before I loved him, he'd been part of my life—ever since he was twelve and his dad bought the house two doors down from ours, because Tommy's mother had died and the tiny cottage was just right for the two of them. It was only two blocks from

Mr. Wright's garage, so he could keep an eye on Tommy.

In no time at all Tommy got to be known in the neighborhood as "that wild Wright kid." None of us had anything to do with him then. The Hartwells' big house and high fence were in between. And Laurie was fourteen then and beginning to act awfully grown-up. Rich was only four, and I was a shy, timid, careful little girl of ten. But we couldn't help knowing about the scrapes he was always in and out of.

I was coming home from a Brownie meeting the day he broke the Hartwells' front window. I'd stood shuddering on the sidewalk in front of our house, listening to the four loud, rough boys arguing. Their ball had got stuck in the Hartwells' eaves. "If somebody threw a rock up there, that would push it out!" It was Tommy who'd said that. They all thought it was a good idea, but nobody wanted to do it.

Finally one of them said, "You do it, Tommy. It was your idea."

When he hesitated, another one said, "I dare you, Tommy." And that did it. Tommy picked up a rock and threw it. The smash of the window was deafening. I cased around behind our hedge, unseen, half listening and watching with a vicarious kind of terror. They all ran—except Tommy. I saw him swallow hard and square his shoulders and take a deep breath. Then he marched right up to the door. I heard the awful tongue-lashing he took. And I watched him from our yard as he worked it out in trade all that summer, mowing their lawn and weeding.

Then there was the time I saw smoke coming out of the Wrights' garage, and I thought it was on fire. I'd gone running to see and found Tommy being very, very sick. He'd been smoking one of his father's cigars. "Get out of here," he told me savagely. "It's none of your business."

I backed away, righteously disapproving. "But why did you want to do it?" I couldn't help asking.

"Because I wanted to see what it was like," he said. "I wanted to try it."

There was the time he and two other fellows got picked up for drag racing their jalopies. Tommy won, but he lost his driver's license for six months.

There were dozens of things. It was always something. Because Tommy couldn't resist a dare, or speed, or trying everything once.

But there was a sweet, gentle side to Tommy, too.

Like the day it began for us. I was lying in the hammock in our yard, browsing through a movie magazine. It was the summer I was fifteen, the summer Laurie got married. And I was full of dreams and vague yearnings. One minute it was peaceful and quiet. The next minute a tom cat came flying over the Hartwells' fence with a sparrow in its mouth. I screamed. A sec-

ond later Tommy came leaping over after him. He caught the cat starting up the tree that held one end of my hammock and gently extricated the bird. The cat ran, and we examined the petrified little creature.

I said thinly, "It's dead."

"No," Tommy said, "it's just stunned." He was tenderly feeling it all over. "They get like this when they're scared."

We fixed up a box and stuffed it with tissue and bread crumbs and a little pan of water. Then we put it in Tommy's garage. "So no other animal'll get it while it's so helpless," Tommy said.

The next morning we met each other going in to check. Tommy lifted the door, and the bird soared out. We grinned at each other. And suddenly a funny look came into his eyes. "Say, you've grown up, haven't you?"

I blushed. "I guess most people do," I said primly.

Then we both laughed again, and Tommy said, "There's a swell Western at the Knickerbocker. Want to go tonight?"

"I'll ask my mother," I said. I turned and hurried home then, so he wouldn't see the excitement that was bubbling up in me. Nothing could have stopped me, even though Mom did try.

"He's a wild one," she said, pursing her lips. "That boy's made for trouble. There's no telling what he might do."

"He isn't like that, Mom," I said dreamily. "He's—nice."

Daddy spoke up. "If they come right home, I don't see the harm."

So I went. And that night was the beginning for us. Neither one of us ever looked at anybody else after that. It was as if we'd found each other, and it was all settled.

There were so many things I loved about Tommy. There was the time Jimmy Barnes lost a bet and had to take Maybelle Hopkins to the junior prom. Maybelle must have weighed over two hundred pounds. He'd had to do it, but he left her sitting alone all evening while he danced with everyone else.

Tommy was furious. He said, "Would you mind, honey, if I asked her for a dance?"

I guess that he just couldn't stand it. And neither could I. I said, "I wish you would. I'll go powder my nose."

Tommy danced four dances with her. He was the only one. When it was over, we took her out for hamburgers and then to her house, where Tommy walked to the door with her.

And there was the time I'd planned a picnic for his eighteenth birthday. It was a beautiful Saturday in early September. It was going to have to be our last for the summer, and I wanted it to be special. I'd spent the morning frying chicken and making little sandwiches and jugs of lemonade while Tommy fixed poles for us and dug for worms, so we could fish in Sutter's Creek. We'd started out of eleven. By the time we got to the woods, a lot of angry, black clouds had gathered from nowhere. A second later they just opened up like Niagara Falls.

"Maybe it'll stop," I said.

(Continued on page 24)





# IS MARRIAGE ON HIS MIND?

***Your Date-  
Courter  
or Just  
Escorter?***

by  
JANET HALL

**I**T MIGHT be the same old story, but, believe me, when you're one of the characters, the story doesn't seem so routine," Mary Lou said bitterly. "Charlie and I went together for four years and for three of those years we were unofficially engaged. Why the long engagement? Because Charlie didn't want to get married. Of course, he never said that. Whenever I'd try to set the date, his mother would get sick or he'd lose his job. Once he told me it wouldn't be right to get married without at least two thousand dollars in the bank. I was always understanding because I was afraid of losing him. After going

(Continued on page 60)

(Continued from page 22)

Tommy earned his neck around. "Nope," he said. "It's gonna be a humdinger."

Tears of disappointment crowded up in my eyes. He pretended not to notice. "I've got a better idea," he said, backing the car around.

We went to his house. His Dad worked all day Saturdays. I said we couldn't be in there alone, and Tommy said why not, if we didn't do anything wrong. I thought about how furious Mom would be. And then I thought about all the food in the basket and it being Tommy's birthday and all. So we sneaked around through the alley and went in.

It was one of the nicest times we ever had. We played records and danced and ate and toasted our nut-mallows over the stove burners. While we were cleaning up, I said, "Happy birthday, darling—even if it wasn't the way I planned it."

"It was happy," he said, "because you're the only present I want. Ever. Always." Then his brown eyes got all soft. "I'm just going to have to kiss you, honey, so I guess I better take you home."

He didn't touch me then. We gathered up the stuff and went out the back way. When we got to our porch, he kissed me.

Not that our love changed Tommy. We still had trouble over that other side of him. Like times we went to the amusement park—the high rides and the fast, jerky, wrenching whips and the upside-down twirls terrified me. But Tommy couldn't get enough of them. One night I'd had all I could take. My insides were churning, and I was so dizzy I couldn't have walked without hanging onto him. But he insisted on one more ride. I said weakly, "I can't."

And he said, pulling me along, "Don't be aissy. I'll hold onto you." So we went. And when we got off, I stood there, right in front of the swarming crowds, throwing up and crying and humiliated to the depths of my being.

He kept apologizing and blaming himself and begging me to forgive him. But I couldn't—not for two days. Then on the third day, while I was shopping for Mom, he followed me into the supermarket. Before I could guess what he was up to, he was down on his knees in front of me, saying loudly, "Please forgive me, Lynn."

Everyone stared, and I flushed. Then I understood. He was humiliating himself to even the score. I hissed. "Get up, Tommy. Everyone's looking at us." He did, and we began giggling, and then it was all right again.

It wasn't our last fight, though. There were other times. The worst was that next spring when six of us rode out to the airport just for something to do. Tommy loved to watch the little excursion planes take off and land. You could go up for fifteen minutes over the city for five dollars apiece. The fellows all wanted to go the worst way, but none of them could afford it. Then Tommy—leave it to Tommy—figured out a way a person could smuggle him-

self in. Everybody began tossing it around, the way you do. One thing led to another, and Jeff Salisbury was saying, "Why don't you try it, Tommy? Go on, I dare you." And the other kids were egging him on. He didn't even hear me begging him not to.

It was awful. We watched him get in, unseen by the pilot or other passengers. Then we watched the plane take off. Only it didn't come back. An hour went by. Then another. And Jeff said, in a scared voice, "What do you think we ought to do?" We chewed over it for another half-hour, and finally agreed we'd just have to go home and keep quiet and wait.

I never forgot that night—how I lay awake, suffering and worrying and praying. The next morning we found out that Tommy had stowed away in the wrong plane. He'd been carried to Mexico City on a specially chartered plane. The authorities called his father, who had to wire the money for Tommy's return. I was furious, and he was ashamed. But I never could stay mad. When that fight blew over, he grinned sheepishly and said, "But you know, it was fun, Lynn. It's the first time I've ever been out of the country." And it almost started all over again.

I helped pay for that scrape, too. Tommy was working part time for his father then, and he made him turn back every cent he made till the cost of that plane ride home was paid for. It meant months of no shows, no malts, no rides even. Tommy couldn't even afford to buy gas.

But I loved him. Even with all his faults, I loved him. Just being with Tommy, even being unhappy with him, was better than not being with him at all. I just couldn't imagine living without him.

Through the years Mom kept fussing. "Some day he'll break your heart, Lynn," she'd say. And I'd tell her it was too late. He had my heart. Or she'd say, "I don't know what you two have in common. You're so different, as different as night and day."

And I'd say to her, "Mom, that's why we're good for each other. We balance each other." I thought my attitude was very mature.

The fall I started my senior year, Tommy had already been through school a year and was working full time for his father. He was earning a good salary and had quite a lot saved. He wanted me to skip my last year and marry him then.

But I was too sensible. I said, "I have to get my diploma, Tommy. I might need it. Someday I might have to go to work." I didn't tell him, but I knew Mom would never forgive me. She'd finally resigned herself to Tommy, and I didn't want to spoil it all. So I just said, "Besides, it wouldn't be right."

So we waited. And finally the time came. The day after I graduated, we sent out the wedding invitations. We bought my wedding dress, and I had two showers, and the gifts began to pour in. Tommy and I rented a little apartment and began buying furniture. The pot of gold at the end of my lovely

rainbow was right around the corner, and I waited through those last days and nights wondering if people ever did actually burst with happiness.

And then, two weeks before our wedding, we had our last fight.

I'd been over at Tommy's that night, having dinner with him and his dad. All through the meal Tommy kept talking about the high-powered racer his father had taken in the day before. Two fellows were driving from New York to Florida, and they'd broken down just outside of our town. Tommy's dad had been called to tow it back for repairs. I was bored with it, impatient. I wanted to talk about the bedroom suite I'd seen in DeWitt's that day. So I never did know what had gone wrong with the car. I only knew it was fixed then, and the owner was picking it up the next day.

"I've never driven a job like that," Tommy said wistfully. "I don't see how it would hurt if I just took it around the block."

"I've got no right to let anybody drive that car," his dad said firmly. "And I don't want to hear any more about it."

But Tommy couldn't leave it alone. He kept telling me about it, and I kept getting more and more resentful. After dinner Mr. Wright went off to his bowling, and Tommy and I did the dishes. And after that we sat around, hickering, pulling in two different directions. Tommy kept going to the refrigerator for beer. He kept saying, "Want a beer?" And I kept saying, "No, and I think you've had enough, and getting more frustrated by the minute."

"If you could see it, Lynn," he said, "you'd understand. Want to take a walk down? I could show you—"

"No," I said flatly. "You're acting like a little kid about that car," I added angrily, "as if it were a toy or something. Anyone would think you were a little boy, instead of a twenty-year-old man about to be married." That was the rub. I wanted him to talk about us, our plans.

But he was all full of the racer. And he kept drinking beer. And one thing led to another, the way it always did with Tommy.

At ten o'clock, I said, "If you say one more word about that car, I'm going home."

"Someday I'm going to have one like that," he said. His words kind of all blurred together from all the beer he'd drunk.

I flounced out in a rage. Tommy didn't follow me. And he didn't call—ever again.

I found out the next morning he'd gone down to the garage and taken the car out. He'd driven down to River Road "to let her out and see what she could do." He'd gone through the red light at Washington while old Mr. Kanter was walking across. He'd killed Mr. Kanter.

The whole town turned against Tommy. I think Mom was more furious than anybody. "At least you were spared in time, Lynn," she said between telephone calls. Mom was busy calling

(Continued on page 26)



LET

DO  
SOMETHING  
FOR YOU

by DIANA DAY

**C**HOOSING make-up colors just for the colors themselves could be confusing this season. There's a wealth of dazzling colors, and all are beguiling enough to lure a girl right into an unbecoming make-up. So rather than allow make-up colors, lovely in themselves, to encourage you to lose your color sense, keep a close check on your color type and be

(Continued on page 43)

(Continued from page 24)

off the wedding, wrapping the gifts to be returned. "Be thankful this happened before you were married," she kept saying.

Even Dad had had it. "Not that he's bad," he said carefully. "But he is trouble. You're well out of it, Lynn."

Laurie, snug and secure in her own life, said, "You're still so young, honey. You'll get over it. The right man'll come along."

Rich was only twelve then. I don't know what he thought, if anything.

They all thought I was holding up fine, being real sensible. They didn't know it was only because I was more dead than alive.

I only saw Tommy twice after that. The first time was the day his dad took me to the city jail, where they were holding him for trial. All the light had gone out of his eyes. They were dark, bottomless pits of agony. It was like looking in a mirror.

I said, "I love you, Tommy."

"It's over for us, Lynn," he said. "I want you to find someone else."

A month later I sat with Mr. Wright at the trial. Tommy was convicted on a charge of manslaughter with a vehicle and a felony drunk charge. He was sentenced to five years in the state prison.

There were tears in Mr. Wright's eyes when we walked toward Tommy afterward. "He never meant to harm anybody, Lynn," he said. "He was just too full of life."

Tommy and the guard waited for us. I said helplessly, hopelessly, "Tommy—Tommy!" while the tears streamed down my face.

Tommy wasn't full of life any more. A kind of gray, dead mask had settled over his face. His eyes were all inward going. I couldn't tell what he was thinking or feeling. "I'm never going to see you again, Lynn," he said with a terrible, cold conviction. "I'll never forgive myself."

He didn't touch me. He turned to his father and put his arms around him. "I'm sorry, Dad," he whispered.

For a while I wrote letters and sent little things—things on the approved list. But Tommy never answered. One Sunday I took the three-hour bus trip to visit him. But he wouldn't see me. After that I stopped trying. I stopped praying. I just gave up.

But, even so, somehow I lived through that next year and a half. I wasn't consciously waiting for Tommy exactly. If you've had a leg amputated, you don't wait for it to come back. You just limp along without it, with a nagging kind of hopeless regret. That's what I was doing—limping along without my heart.

I got a job with an insurance agency. I had to do something. During that time Laurie had her second baby, and mom's mother died. Grandpa came to live with us, in Laurie's old room. He and Rich got to be bosom buddies. Life went on all around me, not quite touching me.

And then early that December Les Carter came to our town. My boss, old Mr. Buchanan, who'd managed the

agency for years, died suddenly in a heart attack, and the house office in Chicago sent Les out to take over his branch.

Les was Tommy's opposite in every way. He had nice, serious blue eyes and black hair and everything about him—the way he talked and walked and dressed—radiated a kind of quiet assurance. Somehow, you knew he'd never let anybody down.

Not that I compared them then. That first day he arrived and introduced himself to all of us and said to me, "I hope you'll help me get the hang of things around here, Lynn. I'll try not to impose." I just thought how nice he was.

"Anything I can do, of course," I said.

That was three weeks before Christmas. My respect and liking for him grew with each day. He was smart and quick and anxious to succeed. But he always had time to be considerate and friendly to all of us. Being his secretary, I worked closely with him, and inevitably little personal statistics slipped out. He'd worked his way through college, graduating two years ago. That made him about twenty-four. His father was dead. His mother was living with his married sister on the north side of Chicago, where he grew up. Up till now, he'd been too busy getting ahead to get serious about any girl. He liked our little town. He wanted to make good and stay and build up the agency—and a life for himself.

The morning of Christmas Eve he gave each of us a gold pen and told us we could go home. I was the last to leave. I said, "Well, Merry Christmas—!" And something blank in his smile made me realize how alone he was. The next thing I knew I heard myself saying, "Tonight at our house is trimming the tree and preparing for the feast tomorrow. We always do our celebrating Christmas Day on account of my sister's children. If you'd like to spend it with us, I know Mom would love to have you."

Suddenly all his reserve fell away, and he grinned boyishly, thanking me.

It was a wonderful day. He brought a five-pound box of candy for Mom and big dolls for Robin and Sandy. He talked politics with Dad and Chicago's old familiar haunts with Grandpa, who'd lived there when he was a boy. He helped Rich work the puzzles I'd given him. After dinner he dried the dishes while I washed.

The family was unanimously crazy about him. After he left, Mom said, "I knew the right one would come along, Lynn."

"Don't be silly," I said. "I just felt sorry for him." But I did feel warmer inside than I had in a long time. Bring a little happiness to someone else, I thought, and some of it spills over into you. That was all.

But it wasn't all. It was only the beginning. That next week at work he said, "If you haven't anything planned for New Year's Eve, Lynn, would you let me take you out—dinner, then dancing or a show?"

Out of sheer force of habit I started

to say I was busy, and then I remembered Sue's party—"It's not a couple thing, Lynn," she'd said. "Just a lot of old friends getting together."—I'd told her I'd see. But I knew it would be couples—the old crowd were all either married or engaged. I didn't have any intention of going.

Until then, I said impulsively, "There's a party. You'd like them, Les. It'll be a good way to get you acquainted."

Everybody there liked him, too. At midnight someone turned off the lights, and Les kissed me lightly on the cheek. "Good luck for the new year," he whispered.

When we left, Sue pulled me aside. "He's a darling, Lynn. I sang him quick." She was a little high, and I laughed it off.

On the way home we stopped at an all-night diner for coffee, and Les said, "I don't know how, and I'm not asking, but you've been hurt some way, Lynn. Will you let me try to help?"

I said flatly, "The boy I was going to marry is in prison for three and a half more years." And besides that, I thought, we're through.

He didn't bat an eyelash. "We could have fun together once in a while," he said softly. "You could show me around, and I'd appreciate it."

So we went along on that basis. He didn't rush me. He never mentioned Tommy. He was just always there at the right time, doing and saying the right things.

One Sunday that spring we drove out to the new housing tract at the west end of town. Les was angling for the blanket fire insurance coverage and wanted to look it over. That was the day he told me he loved me.

We'd stopped for supper at the Mill-creek Inn. "Maybe it's too soon, Lynn," he said, "but you might as well know. I'm in love with you."

I felt myself tightening up. "I'm sorry," I whispered. "I should have—"

"I'm not," he said. "His hand came over mine. 'Even if you can't ever love me.' He waited, but my throat was too full to speak. 'Do you think you ever could, dear?' he asked finally."

"I don't know," I said miserably. "I don't think so."

He smiled. "I'll keep trying," he said.

That night in bed I kept mulling over it. For the first time in over a year I deliberately let myself remember Tommy—Tommy and me. It all seemed so far away, unreal, dead. But the nagging ache was still there inside my heart. I knew I wasn't being fair to Les, taking so much, able to give so little.

Maybe I could have been stronger and fairer about Les if the family hadn't started in on me around that time. It was like a mass campaign to get me to forget Tommy and to marry Les.

Mom started it out of a clear sky at breakfast one morning. "You've got to stop pining for Tommy, Lynn," she said. "Even if he were free, he couldn't do anything for you."

I stared at her, openmouthed. I started to say I thought the subject of

(Continued on page 28)

# How To Prevent Varicose Veins

by Regina Foster, Secrets Medical Reporter

**E**ACH year thousands of modern women suffer pain and embarrassment from the development of unsightly varicose veins on their thighs, legs, and ankles. Obstetricians report that a large percentage of young mothers acquire prominent enlarged veins during pregnancy or shortly after birth. Other physicians contend too many housewives and working women are being blemished for life by ruptured blood vessels and congested veins.

These doctors say, however, that varicose (*Continued on page 42*)

(Continued from page 26)

Tommy was taboo. But she was going on about Les. Look what he could do for me. He could give me a lovely home, stability, lifelong devotion. "You just don't know how lucky you are to have him," she said. "Any girl would give her eyeteeth for a fellow like that."

That night after dinner it was Dad attacking Tommy. "You've got to look ahead, baby," he said. "Tommy might not always be able to work for his father, you know. Then what? With a prison record you always have trouble getting a job—holding one—On the other hand, take Les," he said, "standing on his own two feet, building security, a fine reputation."

I said weakly, "What brings all this on now?"

But nobody told me. Not then.

Laurie had a lot to say, too, one Saturday morning when she dropped over and found me alone. "Say you did wait for Tommy, Lynn—Do you think it's fair to bring children into the world with a cross like that—a father who's killed a man and served a prison term? Les would be a father they could always be proud of—depend on—"

Even Sue got into it one noon when we'd met for lunch. "You know how the crowd feels about Tommy, hon. It would be rotten for you, tied to a fellow nobody wanted anything to do with. That can be pretty hard on love, you know. With Les you'd be welcome everywhere."

"What is this?" I asked testily. "Tommy and I have been finished for almost a year. He's locked away. I haven't mentioned him."

"We just want you to marry Les, dear," she said gently.

They all kept at it, every chance they had—Mom, Dad, Laurie. Only Rich and Grandpa kept out of it. Tommy's spirit would be broken, they said. He'd never get over his guilt. It wasn't fair to me to consider sharing that. There'd always be bad times for him, remembering, shadowing his life. How much happier I'd be with a man with a clear conscience—meaning Les, of course.

Or they'd ask, how could I know this would be the end of Tommy's troubles? Hadn't he always gone from one scrape to another? Who knew what would be next? When he did get out, that is. With Les I could be sure. I could trust him, depend on him. I wouldn't ever have to be afraid of anything.

In spite of myself I began to agree. Maybe grown-up love, the sensible kind that holds up marriages and molds children, maybe that kind was quiet and calm. Maybe I did love Les. Maybe the tumultuous, wild, almost painful emotion I'd felt for Tommy wasn't real love at all. Maybe it was only a part of growing up.

And Tommy had deserted me, hadn't he? He'd brought the mess all on himself. Then what had he left me with? "It's over for us, Lynn," he'd said coldly. "I'm never going to see you again. I want you to find someone else." A hard, belated little knot of anger against Tommy began to form in me.

So I kept on working with Les,

spending evenings and week ends with him, liking him and depending on him more and more.

Then that September I met Mr. Wright in the post office one day and found out what had been behind the concentrated brainwashing that past spring.

We almost bumped into each other. I couldn't avoid him, as I usually did. He looked years older and so loudly my heart went out to him. "What do you hear from Tommy?" I asked.

"He took it hard last spring," he told me. "Being turned down on the parole. But he's pulled himself together now. He'll make it."

I eased away from him, stunned, suddenly realizing why they'd all been at me so. They'd all known, and they'd been scared. Scared Tommy would be back and I'd still be free, still yearning for him. They'd been trying to protect me.

But I hadn't known. I hadn't been able to share his hope and then his disappointment. Somehow it gave me an empty feeling—as if a page had finally closed.

Two nights later I accepted Les's proposal. I said, "I think I love you, Les—if that's good enough. I'll try to be a good wife—the very best I can."

"It's plenty good enough, darling," he said huskily. He held me close, and it felt good and safe and warm. "It'll be all right, Lynn. You'll see. I'll make you happy." Then he took my hand and slipped on the beautiful diamond he'd been carrying around for months.

Of course, everyone was thrilled. Right away Mom flew into a frenzy of wedding plans. That next week I began to train little Judy Roberts for my job. Two weeks after that I quit. And then Les and I began househunting.

And then Laurie came in and said, "Tommy's back."

I was still lost in memories when Mom came back from the kitchen—still staring blankly at the wedding invitations scattered all over the card table. "You had to find out sooner or later," she said. "I just wish it could have—" Her words trailed off, and she took a deep breath. "Just don't do anything foolish, Lynn," she warned me briskly.

She just wished Tommy's parole could have waited till I was safely married, I thought. I shook my head, trying to shake away the sticky cobwebs from the past. I wouldn't let it make any difference. I'd suffered enough. I'd finally begun to live again. It had been hard and long and painful, but I had found peace and hope and a bright, new future. I wouldn't spoil it. I forced a smile. "Don't worry, Mom," I said. "I'm over Tommy."

That's what I said. But maybe I wasn't too sure. I knew I was bound to run into him somewhere. But, ostrich-like, I'd catch myself glancing down at his house before stepping outside to make sure he wasn't around. Once when I was backing out of the garage, I saw him walking down the alley. He didn't turn, and I breathed a sigh of relief. But it will happen. I told myself. And then I'll find out it really is all over. I kept steeling myself

for it, reminding myself over and over of all the reasons why there wasn't a chance for us—why I wanted to marry Les.

It did happen—three days later, that next Saturday.

I'd driven Mom to the grocery store that morning, and we'd stocked up for the week. I let her out with two big sacks and then went on into the garage. When I came in the kitchen door a minute later, she was standing, white-faced and trembling, at the kitchen table, holding a note.

"It's Rich!" she said frantically. "They've gone to Sutter's Woods, rabbit hunting." Her voice rose shrilly. "Grandpa has taken that child and that gun into the woods!"

I tried to calm her. "But Grandpa's with him, Mom," I said soothingly. "What can happen?"

"You've got to go after them, Lynn," she said, almost in tears.

I argued, but I couldn't get around Mom's unreasonable terror of guns—or her persistence in thinking of Rich as a baby. So there was nothing to do but get the car out again and go scouting for Rich and Grandpa.

I'd just turned onto the old gravel road when I saw Tommy trudging along ahead of me. I braked the car, my heart crowding up in my throat. There was something so dejected in his walk. He looked so alone—Tommy, who was always in the midst of everything. He was thinner.

Suddenly he turned, and we stared at each other with a kind of horror.

I was the first to find my voice. "I'd heard you were back, Tommy," I said. "I'm glad!"

He walked slowly over to the car, and I saw the sunken black circles under his eyes, the new, unfamiliar lines at the corners of his mouth. "How've you been, Lynn?" he asked. His eyes were all flattened against me—the way they'd been that day at the trial.

"Fine," I said. "Just fine." Then because I couldn't stand the silence between us, I began prattling about why I was there—about Grandpa and Rich and the rifle and Mom's fears. And then abruptly my foolish words just stopped coming. "Can I give you a lift somewhere?" I asked.

He grinned crookedly. "I'm just taking a walk, looking over the old haunts." But he got in beside me, and we drove in silence to the clearing by the creek.

I pulled to a stop, and we both got out. The old log was there—where we'd sat so many times, making plans, dreaming, kissing. A great surge of weakness swept through me, and I sank down on it. He sat at the other end, a careful three feet away from me. Then I saw him staring at my ring.

"I heard about your engagement," he said dully. "I heard he's a swell fellow. I'm glad, Lynn. I hope you'll be very happy." There was no warmth in his voice. He might have been mousing polite words for some stranger. It was all dead and gone. It had all died the night Tommy killed Mr. Kanter

(Continued on page 30)

# Real Cool Desserts and Drinks

by Elsie Barton

JUST as a rousing finale will add excitement to a good play, so will an inspired dessert add a touch of drama to the simplest menu and complement a more elaborate one.

We have for you this month a remarkably good collection of summer dessert recipes. We'd recommend that you try the beverage recipes, too, since they not only satisfy thirst, but delightfully cool you off in these warm-weather days.

(Continued on page 71)



Give one of these star billing at dessert time: Cherry Banana Scrub, a sparkling specialty topped with whipped cream; Cherry Malt Milkshake, a new old-time favorite; or Caramel Cherry Cooler, a tall and creamy fruited delight.

Cherry Growers and Industries Foundation

(Continued from page 28)

Everything had been over all that time—all those two years and four months. It had just taken me almost that long to realize it.

I don't know how long we sat there making bits of meaningless conversation with long, uncomfortable stretches of silence in between. Yes, he was going to be working with his father—Yes, new buildings were sprouting up like mad all over town—No, Indian summer hadn't hit yet—we could look for it any day—I didn't know how the fishing was this year—

I kept nervously twisting my ring, not knowing I was doing it till it slipped off into the brush between us. I cried out and bent over, tearing at the weeds. And then it all happened so fast.

Tommy said, "We'll find it." And just as he leaned over, the bullet whirled past. A look of stunned surprise came into his eyes as he reached his hand around to his shoulder.

It was another second before I realized what had happened. Then he was slipping out of his jacket, and I saw the blood oozing out all over his shirt sleeves. And I screamed. The next thing I knew Grandpa and Rich were there.

Rich stared at the blood and said, "Gee—" His face was all screwed up. I thought he was going to cry. He dropped the rifle as if it were a live rattler.

Grandpa looked worried. "Let's have a look at that, son."

"It's only a flesh wound," Tommy said. "Just a scratch. It's all right."

"Yep," Grandpa said, straightening up. He dug in his pocket and pulled out his hanky, winding it around Tommy's arm, under his shirt. "It'll be all right. We better get you to the doc. though, to bandage it proper."

"No," Tommy said. "I can take care of it. See—it's drying up already." He slipped back into his jacket. "Please forget it."

"But you could have been killed!" I said shrilly. No one else seemed to realize how horribly close it had been. "If you hadn't leaned over at just that second, the bullet would have gone

through your head. You might have been killed, Tommy!"

We all looked at each other in speechless shock. Then Grandpa said, "I guess your mom was right," His nice creased face was all full of shame and apology. "Rich isn't ready for rabbit hunting yet—" He broke off as the situation suddenly hit him—Tommy and me—alone at the creek. His eyes widened with disapproval, and he said stiffly to Tommy, "I'm responsible for this, and I insist you let Doc Grover look at it. You can ride over with Rich and me, or—he looked at me sharply—" or Lynn can drive you there."

"I'll take him, Grandpa," I said quickly, wanting him and Rich to leave. I was confused and ashamed and upset.

He nodded. "We'll meet you there," he said, tugging at Rich.

But Rich hung back, the horror of what had almost happened still in his eyes. "Gee, I'm sorry," he told Tommy. "I'm real sorry."

Tommy clapped him on the back. "It was my fault," he said.

"I should have known better than to sit here like a target during the rabbit-hunting season."

"We'll see you at Doc Grover's," Grandpa cut in sharply.

And finally they were gone. A minute later we heard Grandpa's car start up. Then I began to cry.

"Hey," Tommy said, sounding more like his old self. "Nothing happened."

"Something did happen," I sobbed. "You almost got killed." I was getting a glimpse of what that would have been like—How flat and empty and meaningless everything would be with no Tommy anywhere in the world at all.

Tommy shrugged. "Life is a gamble," he said. "You never know. Every time you cross a street—" His voice trailed off sickly as he remembered.

But he was right, I thought. You couldn't count on it for a minute. You just took what you had and used it and lived every precious minute in the best, most fulfilling way you could.

Suddenly there was only one thing in the whole world that mattered. Nothing else counted—not pride or the aw-

ful months and years of suffering or what other people thought or the hard road ahead. Only Tommy mattered. So I had to ask. I had to know. "Don't you love me any more, Tommy?"

He looked at me, his eyes storming up with anger. "I love you so much," he said furiously. "I won't wreck any more of your life."

"Oh, Tommy," I whispered. "I have no life without you." I flung myself shamelessly into his arms, holding him tight, crying again in my relief. And finally I felt his arms coming around me, tight and strong. Our lips came together like a promise. A new beginning.

When we finally pulled apart, I saw that the shadow had fallen from his eyes. They were all full of hope and life again. "Are you sure, Lynn?" he asked anxiously.

"I'm sure," I said. "I'm so sure."

"I've learned my lesson, Lynn," he said humbly. "I know how I've hurt you—and Dad. I'm going to make it up to him. I'm going to work hard in the garage. And I'll spend my life trying to make it up to you, darling." His voice broke, but he kept on. "It'll be different, you'll see, Lynn. I've grown up—"

I stopped his words with my lips. I knew he'd changed. I knew he'd never do the crazy, impulsive things he used to. Because he'd never forget his heedless recklessness had caused Mr. Kanter's death.

I said shakily, getting up. "We've got to get to Dr. Grover's or Grandpa will be back after us." Then suddenly I remembered the ring. "We have to find it," he said. "So I can give it back." A fleeting feeling of sadness swept through me at the thought of telling Les, hurting him. But I knew it would hurt him much more if I married him always loving Tommy. And I always would.

Tommy found it. And I slipped it into my wallet. Then we started back to Dr. Grover's. And after that, to tell our world. We both knew it wouldn't be easy. But we did have our love, and with love you can conquer anything.

• THE END

## I Had to Deliver My Own Baby!

(Continued from page 21)

didn't go. I never will be sure just why. Plain stupidity, I guess. But we live on a farm, twenty miles from New Whiteland, Indiana, and a farm wife just doesn't take off and leave a new batch of baby chicks unattended and tell the cows they'll have to wait to get milked.

Cort holds down a job in Indianapolis, and I guess you'd say we're sort of part-time farmers. But all the same, I felt guilty about leaving our place before I had to. I figured that when my pains started, I'd just ride to the hospital with Cort, or if he was at work, I'd call my neighbor and she could drive me into the hospital at New Whiteland.

But, of course, it didn't work out

that way. If you remember, none of us really expected a serious flood. Water, yes, even ruined crops, but we didn't expect the big dam at Gas City to break.

When Cort left for the night shift that night that our child was to be born, neither of us was worried. The water was rising, but all the radio reports kept saying that the river was expected to crest any minute. I'd felt nervous all day, but I didn't tell Cort. I just figured that I'd call him if my pains started. In the meantime I didn't want to worry him.

After he left, I called my sister-in-law, to see if little Cathy was okay. Then I decided to do a little sewing. Outside, the rain pounded steadily

against the windows, and I could hear it pattering off the drainpipes from the house.

Halfway up the stairs, I stopped. My water had broken. Being a farm wife, I knew about dry births. Usually, when a woman's water breaks, the doctor will wait his patient to go into the hospital, even if she isn't in labor. At our farm, Cort and I always kept a real careful eye on a mare or a cow whose water had broken before she went into labor.

I knew I had to call my doctor. I walked slowly down the stairs to the phone. My hands were trembling as I dialed his number, and when I finally got his home, the line was busy. Looking back, I know I should have called Cort right then, but for some reason I felt like I wanted to be able to tell Cort that the doctor was waiting for us—that all we had to do was drive to New Whiteland and they'd be ready for me.



What I didn't know then was that when you're ready to have your baby, if you can't get the doctor, get your husband, your neighbor, or somebody. Don't fool around waiting, as I did.

I walked around the house, picking things up, straightening, killing time, until twenty or so minutes had passed. Then I had my first real pain.

It hit me like a sledge hammer. The second one came very soon afterward, but it wasn't nearly as bad. I dialed the doctor's number again, but nothing happened. It didn't even ring. It occurred to me that there might be trouble on the line due to the rising water, but I didn't dream that the phone might be out.

I WENT upstairs, got my coat on, and on the way down, I had another pain. This time, with this baby, those easy, "first-stage" labor pains—the kind that warn you, allow you to get ready—had skipped me entirely. Later my doctor told me that this sometimes happens, that there is no assurance that a woman will bear a child in the proper "stages" that the books talk about.

I got to the last step, and another pain doubled me over. I tried not to push with it.

When I picked up the phone this time and heard no buzz, I knew the phone lines were dead. And I had no car to get to the hospital in, even if I could drive, which I couldn't at that point.

I sank slowly to the floor. In the hall our big grandfather clock struck nine-thirty. It always played a little tune on the half-hour, and a longer one on the hour. It had all happened so fast!

I walked to the window, trying to think. Beyond me, a yellowish light showed from our neighbor's farm. I knew I'd have to do something, and, in a pinch, Cort and I had planned for me to get help from a neighbor. Of course, we'd thought I could phone them. Well, I told myself, you'll just have to walk there. Or else have the baby here alone.

It wasn't far, really. Just down the road and over the little wooden bridge that spanned the creek. Our neighbors were almost always home, and in a rainstorm like this, they'd be sure to be. I buttoned my coat up over my protruding tummy and somehow managed to get my boots on. I had another pain while I was putting them on, but it was no worse than the last one. Because I'd had a baby before, I felt sure that this baby wasn't in the birth position. The pains felt preparatory, as if the child inside me were still trying to move down the birth canal into the cervix.

A few minutes later I was stumbling along the dark, muddy road toward the house that lay just across the creek. The lights shone a yellowish white, dimmed by the heavy, pounding rain. I got soaked through almost at once, but that didn't bother me too much. My only thought was to get across the small wooden bridge that spanned the creek. Then it would only be a matter of, say, a city block, to my neighbor's.

# GOOD DISCIPLINE for YOUR CHILD

by Alice Texter

JIM CULVER was barely inside the house when his wife Helen began, "I want you to give Billy a good thrashing. He won't mind me at all."

Jim shrugged his work jacket from his shoulders and eyed his wife seriously. "Billy would think a lot of me if I came home and thrashed him every night for something he did during the day, now wouldn't he?" A trace of anger crept into his voice. "If you can't discipline a nine-year-old boy, maybe you'd better take up some other job."

The argument really got going after that. Helen, an efficient housewife, had never been able to handle her lively little son. Instead of properly disciplining the boy, she always threatened, "I'll tell your father," or, "I'll have your father whip you tonight."

Billy soon learned that his father wouldn't punish him, except for evening or week-end mischief. Daytime deviltry met with nothing more serious than a few empty threats.

Few children will mind when they know they can't have to. Temptation lies on every side, and why should they resist it when they can safely get away with anything short of murder?

Larry, ten, would tell you that he loves his mother, yet he pays no attention to her commands. He learned long ago that her threats are empty as air.

"I'll tell Daddy," or, "I'll slap you silly," are mere words which mean nothing.

If he nags too loud and long, Larry tells her to "pipe down" and rides off on his bike. Deep down in his heart, he really does love his mother, but he has absolutely no respect for her authority. He has her pegged a safty.

Larry's dad is a different story. One harsh word from him, and Larry jumps to attention. He knows from past experience that his father's commands are followed by much more than empty threats.

Child guidance authorities tell us that to make a child mind is to make him respect his parents. Love is not destroyed by discipline. Larry goes out of his way to do things for his dad, but he never does anything for his mother unless she asks him to—and then only if he hap-

pens to feel in the right mood to do it.

Discipline doesn't necessarily mean whipping. Fearing a child to stay home from a ball game or party can be a much more severe punishment. The reason for punishment is to show your child that you are boss and that unless he obeys your commands, he will have to pay the penalty.

"Or else—" should be cut from a parent's vocabulary and replaced with, "Now!" Following a command with a threat means that there is an alternative. The child has a choice—to pick up his toys "or else" wait and see what you will do if he doesn't obey. In most instances he will take the chance that you will forget to carry out your threat. "Pick up your toys—now!" leaves no room for hesitation.

It is a parent's duty to raise a child to be a good citizen. A well-disciplined child will be much more likely to develop into a well-balanced adult. The child who gets away with everything will grow up to believe that he can always do as he pleases.

A few strict lessons in obedience will convince a child that his parents are not kidding when they lay down the law. Once a child realizes that you will back up your commands with physical action if necessary, he won't hesitate to obey. Doing as he's told will soon become routine. As his good conduct grows, so will his love and respect.

A child who minds on Monday can be made to obey all week. Discipline must not be reserved for special occasions only. Neither should it be a chain to be bound tightly around a child's neck twenty-four hours a day. A mischievous child is not always a rebellious one. He may become a rebel if he is constantly reprimanded for small mistakes or minor bits of childish mischief.

Empty threats are worse than no discipline at all. "Don't say it unless you mean it," is a good rule for parents to follow. Authority in proper doses commands respect. Radio and TV heroes are symbols of strength. It will surprise and delight your child to discover that you possess the disciplinary strength of Hawk-eye, Annie Oakley, and Superman, all rolled into one.

# COOL, CRISP CASUALS

## PATTERNS OF THE MONTH

4657  
10-18

**4657**—Tiny-waisted dress with a full-circle skirt; cover jacket. Printed Pattern in Misses' Sizes 10 to 18. Size 16 dress takes  $3\frac{1}{4}$  yards of 35-inch fabric; the jacket,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  yards.

**4628**—Wonderful coverall. Slip it on for cooking, gardening, sunning. Printed Pattern in Misses' Sizes 12 to 20. Size 16 takes  $2\frac{3}{4}$  yards of 35-inch fabric.

**4947**—Three for fall—nipped jacket and two skirts. Printed Pattern in Jr. Miss Sizes 9 to 17. Size 13 jacket and slim skirt take  $1\frac{3}{4}$  yards of 35-inch fabric for each.

**4695**—Wonderful muu-muu. Belted, it becomes a smart jacket; free-flaring, a nightgown or house dress. Printed Pattern in Misses' Sizes 10 to 18. Size 16 takes  $3\frac{3}{4}$  yards of 35-inch fabric.

4628 12-20

4695  
10-18

4947  
9-17

Patterns are thirty-five cents each. Send orders (with coins) to: SECRETS, 214, Pattern Department, 343 West 17th Street, New York 11, New York. Add ten cents each for first-class mailing. Send thirty-five cents for color Catalog of Printed Patterns.

I shoved one foot in front of the other. When I got to where the bridge should be, I think I heard, rather than saw, the swirling, black water that rushed just beneath my feet, where the bridge had been. I had another pain—about the third one I'd had since I left home. I bent down, bore with it, and when I straightened up, breathing hard, I realized that the little bridge had been washed away!

Going back home seemed to take much, much longer. Or maybe that was only because my clothes were soaked through and clinging to my heavy body. Or maybe it was because I knew that once I got home, I'd probably have the baby. I knew it would be soon, but I also knew that I still had some time. Enough for me to get home and prepare myself.

When I shoved open my front door, I leaned against the familiar, comforting feeling of the wall, trying to think. What did I need to do? Get to bed—get clean sheets—get something ready to wrap the baby in. Things most women know if they've had a child before.

Then panic struck me. The cord—what about the cord?

Cut it, of course, I told myself. I'd stood by while Cort cut the huge, bluish cord that bound mare and filly together—surely I'd be able to separate myself from my own child!

But I tasted panic in my mouth. Then I groped for the light switch, and nothing happened. Hadn't the lights been on when I left? I remembered that they had. I sank slowly down on the floor, a terrible feeling of despair all through me. I was alone in a raging flood ready to have my baby. And there was no way to phone for help or even get someone to tell me what to do! My child would be born in the dark, without a blanket, because I felt sure that I couldn't climb those old-fashioned, steep stairs to the bedroom.

I'm not sure just what happened to me then. I know I prayed out loud, begging God to help me. And He did. He gave me the greatest gift possible in that terrible moment of despair. He let common sense trickle back into my brain.

Sure, I was alone. But I was inside, not out in the storm. The heat had gone off when the power failed, but still, it was spring, and the house was still warm. I could drag that old cot in from the summer kitchen, and I thought, my mind spinning, I could use a table cloth to cover it with. I knew that it was important to be careful about keeping things sterile, and although my table cloths hadn't been boiled, they'd dried in the sun—nature's greatest germ killer.

NOW I moved efficiently, like a machine. My mind told me what to do to prepare for the baby's birth, and my body stopped me every few minutes or so as the baby came down.

There was an old wood stove in the kitchen, but I didn't know how to start it. It had been there, unused, since we'd bought this place three years before. But it was a comfort just having it

there. Now the big kitchen was still warm from the furnace that had only recently shut off, but perhaps tomorrow, if help still hadn't come, I'd try to light the stove. By then, I knew, my baby would be here, and I mustn't let him get chilly. I remembered what a nurse had told me when Cathy was born, and I'd brought her home in mid-December. "Keep her warm, honey," the little nurse had said. "Babies should breathe warm air—they can't stand a chill when they've been used to the body heat of the womb."

There were some oil lamps in the cupboard, and between pains I took two of them down. I knew where my kitchen matches were, even in the darkness. I struck one, and at first the lamp didn't light. I had another pain, then in the blackness, and when I straightened up, I felt like a light would be the most wonderful gift in the world. I knew I couldn't have a doctor, or even a nurse, or clean, regular sheets, but, please God—couldn't I have a light?

Fortunately, the lamp's wick caught and held. I knew I didn't have much time now. God help me, I prayed. Give me the strength to deliver my baby!

The last pain had moved my child into the birth position. I felt a heaviness between my legs and a strong desire to lie down. But I couldn't. I still had things to do, and I had to do them now, while I had the strength. Afterward, when my child was here, I'd rest.

I walked slowly across the kitchen to the old summer kitchen. It was chilly out there, but I grabbed hold of the cot and got it through the doorway. Then I opened my bottom cupboard drawer and got out two clean tablecloths. I made up the cot, and knowing that there would be blood and a mess, I took newspapers from the stack near the summer kitchen and spread them on the narrow cot. Somewhere I remembered hearing that the ink in the paper repels germs—and I was right, my doctor told me later.

I'd just finished with the cot when I had another pain. Hurry, I told myself. Hurry! I needed—what? Something to wrap the baby in. I pulled open the wrong drawer, then the right one, and grabbed some dish towels. They were wrinkled, but they smelled of fresh air and sunshine. I needed scissors—or a razor blade—to cut the cord with. Would I be able to do that? I decided to worry about that later. I stumbled into the dark hall, trying to remember where my sewing box was.

Then I remembered. It was upstairs in the spare room we'd planned to make into a nursery. And I'd never make it up those stairs—never. I walked back to the kitchen, feeling the stirrings of another pain.

A bad one, this. Time to lie down. Then I looked at the dish drainer, and my little paring knife gleamed up at me. Wouldn't a knife do? This one was plenty sharp, and if I sterilized it—

Carefully, I struck another kitchen match, held it over the knife until the knife's tip was colored black. Was I ready? No—something to tie the cord with—something to put the baby in.

I knew that if I allowed myself the luxury of lying down, I'd never be able to finish my preparations. Doggedly, I dumped my ironing on the floor and spread two terry cloth dish towels in the bottom of the laundry basket. Then I reached into a drawer for string, trying to get it before the next pain came.

That pain forced me, after it had left, to drag myself to the cot. On the way, I used up some of the strength that I was hoping to save. I opened the refrigerator and groped for something to eat, for later. I knew I'd need something to give me strength—to keep me going until help came. My hand touched some cheese. That, I thought, would give me energy—protein—and I'd need liquids to help my milk come in. Cort always left an extra bucket of water for the mare when she'd given birth, to help her feed her young. My hand touched the milk bottle in the dark inside of the refrigerator, and I took it out. I placed it on the floor near the cot and put the big hunk of cheese next to it.

I was ready. I felt a strange sense of pride and expectancy wash over me. A clean bed, newspapers to soak up the blood and mess that always accompany birth, a basket for my child, dish towels to wrap him in, food to keep my strength up so that I could nurse him, a knife to cut the cord, and string to tie it off.

I lay there panting like a puppy. I felt another pain come, and I bore down, raising my legs as I did. I grabbed hold of the cold legs of the cot, pressing downward with my two hands. I heard myself cry out, and it was wonderful to know that now all I had to do was lie there and scream and have my baby. I didn't have to make any more preparations—all that was done.

I could feel my baby's head coming through. I sat partway up, then I grabbed at the tablecloth sheets and opened my mouth and moaned.

AND that's how our son was born—with me in a squatting, sitting-up position. For me, it was easier than it had been when I'd been lying down for Cathy. I instinctively put both my hands on my stomach, pushing, and the rest of the baby's body came out in a hurried surge.

Immediately I heard my son's wail—loud, strong, angry, glorious. He was alive, I knew. And strong!

I allowed myself the luxury of lying down flat on the bed for just a few seconds. At that time I didn't know if I'd had a girl or a boy. Funny, how even at a time like that a mother must know. I struggled back up to a sitting position, tilted the tiny, slimy-feeling body so that I could see. Then I put him in my arms and, instinctively, his little mouth opened in a kind of sucking motion. I put him to my breast. It was dry—it was too soon for the milk to have come in—and he lay there sucking greedily, his face mottled and angry.

Slowly I pulled him closer, and I made myself sit up. I reached down for the sterile kit that lay on a care-

fully folded newspaper, then I looked carefully at the cord that bound my child and me together.

It was thick—as thick as say, clothes-line tripled. It was an odd bluish color, mixed with red. And it throbbed—I could see it pulsate every time my heart beat.

I raised the knife carefully, holding it while I knotted the cord with one hand, as I'd often knotted a darning thread. Then I lowered the knife, and with one quick slice, I cut the cord that had fed and nourished and bound my son and me together for nine months.

There was no pain—no feeling at all. The baby still sucked contentedly, as if nothing at all had happened. Now I lay back. But I wasn't finished. My pains began again, not quite so hard this time. But in a few moments, after six or seven pains, I expelled the placenta, or afterbirth. The uterus, God's miracle, had achieved its purpose. My baby had been born, the blood vessels had been closed off, my child's "nest"—the placenta—had been expelled.

Now there was nothing left for me to do but rest.

Carefully, I wrapped my son in the clean towels. Then I put him gently down in his basket. I remembered that I'd been told with my first baby that lying on the stomach helps the womb to go back into place, so I flopped over. Then I slowly slid the wet newspapers onto the floor. Now my bed was clean and dry. My baby was happily sucking his fist. And I was tired.

I woke up to the mingled sounds of panic. My husband's voice, heavy feet in the hallway, two or three other voices one of them my doctor's.

I opened my eyes to male faces peering at me. They all looked so worried—even my doctor—that I burst into tears. Had I done something wrong? Was the baby all right? Had he died while I slept?

Fortunately, nothing had happened. Our son was sleeping peacefully, and I could honestly say that he seemed to be in better shape than my husband or the sheriff or even my doctor. They all seemed terribly upset. They'd rowed across the swollen river in a boat, then dredged through waist-high water when the boat capsized, to get to me.

Because of the flood I was allowed to recuperate at home. But I received my first of a long series of penicillin shots almost as soon as my doctor looked at me. That was because of the danger of infection.

Now, looking back on it, I guess I'm proud that I bore my son alone, but still, I'm sensible enough to still be a little scared by it. While most births take place normally, with no assistance whatsoever, the delivery room team can make all the difference in the world when it comes to a hard delivery.

While the mother is in labor, the baby's heart beat will be checked at intervals of five to ten minutes, as part of the normal hospital procedure. If it should fall under one hundred beats per minute, trouble is brewing. Most likely, the cord which supplies oxygen to the baby has become tangled or compressed. Then the baby is delivered as quickly

as possible to prevent brain damage or other injury.

When the baby doesn't breathe spontaneously after birth, as—thank God—mine did, doctors can put a tiny oxygen mask on the infant. In modern hospitals the greatest care is taken when the cord is cut from the mother and baby. My doctor told me that I'd been wise to sterilize the knife, but even so, my child and I both risked infection.

**BECAUSE** my son was small and because this was my second pregnancy, I was very lucky and didn't fear. But often mothers do. For thirty to sixty per cent of women who bear first babies, cutting to enlarge the perineum, or muscle bed, must be done, so that the mother doesn't tear.

Believe me, I know I was lucky. If she has to, a woman can bear a child alone, with no help, as I did. But with my next child, I'm going to make sure I'm safe and sound in a labor room, with three or four nurses hovering around, and my doctor within yelling distance!

## They Called Me Mrs. Fancypants

(Continued from page 14)

him—"We didn't do any more than anyone else would have done. Now, if you'll excuse us, we've got to go. We should have had the store open by now." He was striding out the door. I followed him reluctantly, my eyes taking in as much of my surroundings as possible. A grand piano, paintings on the walls—I'd never again see a house like this!

It was when I was back in the truck that I started to shake from the reaction of so much excitement. And once I'd started shaking, I couldn't stop. When we got home, Wes made me go back to bed. But I didn't stay there. I was up again by the time he had the store open, calling Lorna on the phone to tell her everything that had happened. Lorna was a wonderful audience. She kept saying that Wes was a hero and that he'd probably get a medal. "Oh, it wasn't that much," I said. "There wasn't any actual danger. The fire was confined to the roof, and it wasn't as bad as it looked.

"Of course," I added, "if we hadn't come along—" There was no sense in playing it down too much. "That woman fainted right at my feet." I finished dramatically. Then I had to tell it all over again from the beginning.

Enough excitement to last me for months—that's what I thought. I didn't know that was only the beginning. The young man who had talked to us as a reporter, and his paper sent out a photographer to get a picture for the late edition. By that time Lorna and Mac had come over with all the children, and they got in the picture, too. Then the photographer took one of Wes, with Michelle sitting on the arm of the chair, and Bruce leaning over the back of it.

Well, that picture turned out just wonderful. It was right on the front page of the late edition, and underneath it were the words, "I was thinking of

But if it should happen to you—if you should be alone when your child is coming, it's important to remember these things:

1. Prepare a sterile place for the infant and for yourself. Clean sheets—a rubber sheet on top, if possible, or newspapers will do—and a place to lie down. You can have a baby sitting up in a chair, but afterward, you'll find you need the familiar comfort of a bed.

2. Prepare a place for the infant. You won't want him in bed with you, because mothers usually fall into a deep, tired sleep after giving birth. There is danger of rolling on the baby, so be sure to have a basket, or at least some blankets, ready for him. Sure, it's sweet to hold him in your arms, but remember—you just might drop off to sleep and smother him!

3. Don't be in too much of a hurry to cut the cord. For years it was the custom to cut the umbilical cord almost as soon as the baby was born—clamping it to prevent loss of blood, and taping it with linen. Today doctors know that a few minutes after birth, there is a final

surge of blood from the placenta into the baby's body. Why this is so, they don't know, but apparently the baby needs this final ration of blood. So be sure to wait until the cord stops pulsating before you cut and tie the cord. And when you do, be sure you do it high enough so that your doctor can repair it later, if need be.

4. Save the placenta, or afterbirth. Your doctor will want to check and see that it is all out and that you are clean inside.

5. Remember, if you are cut off or alone for some time, you must sustain yourself with food and liquids. The liquids will help bring your milk in. But this is a problem that seldom arises. Usually help comes to a woman, as it did to me, soon after her child is born, so she doesn't have to worry.

6. During your visits to your doctor, especially if you have already given birth, try to find out what needs to be done in an emergency. Every day thousands of babies are born without the help of a doctor. It isn't the best way, but sometimes it happens! • THE END

beginning. On Sunday afternoon Mr. Claidon, the man whose children Wes had helped save, came over to see us. We never kept the store open on Sunday. Wes said we were entitled to our day of rest, just like anybody else. We had gone to church in the morning, and Pastor Olson had written his sermon around us. At least, that's the way it seemed to me, and I felt pretty self-conscious as people kept turning their heads and smiling, and Pastor Olson talked on and on about the acts of courage that are performed with no thought of earthly reward.

If I was self-conscious, Wes was downright mad. At the end of service he made us leave through a side door, so we would escape the handshakes and all the fuss. And he grumbled all the way home about a big splash being made over nothing.

"It won't last long," I said, feeling a small chill as I said it. Life would seem even grimmer now, after all the excitement. I hadn't dared say so to Wes, but secretly I was wondering why we hadn't heard from the Claidons. We knew by now that they were the owners of the big furniture store that advertised on TV all the time. "Luxury on a budget," was their slogan. Lorna had put the idea in my head that we should be getting a reward, and although I had told her that was pure foolishness, I had found myself hoping a little. Maybe the Claidons would give us fifty dollars. Maybe even a hundred. Oh, what Wes and I could do with a hundred dollars!

But when Mr. Claidon did come over, right after Sunday dinner, I was too nervous to think about fifty dollars or a hundred or anything else. He was a big, hearty man, probably a little older than Wes. And was he a talker! He had been on a buying trip to New York when the fire broke out. "Have to keep plugging in order to support the wife and kids," he said to Wes. "You know how it is."

Wes nodded, sort of numbly. I thought nervously that Mr. Claidon meant well, but that it was pretty hard for Wes to compare himself with the owner of an enormous furniture store who took buying trips to New York. By now I wasn't thinking of any reward money at all—I was just hoping he'd get through thanking us and leave.

And then it came. "Darned cold weather we're having," Mr. Claidon said heartily. "Be pretty nice to be soaking up some Florida sunshine, wouldn't it?" Wes and I both nodded like puppets, although we'd never thought of soaking up Florida sunshine any more than we'd thought of going to the moon. Mr. Claidon shook Wes's hand. "You and the wife leave tomorrow. Ten days in Florida. The trip's on me—" He stopped as if too overcome to go any further. Just then the door opened and a photographer was aiming his camera at us and a flash bulb was going off in our faces.

And I had thought it was over! I can't describe the rest of the day—it went by in a blur. All I can remember is Wes repeating that we couldn't close up the store and Mac and Lorna saying that of course we could, that we'd be fools to pass up the opportunity of a lifetime. I remember talking to Mr. Claidon over the phone and saying we didn't know about West Palm Beach, and Mr. Claidon booming that we could choose any place we liked.

"St. Petersburg," I said. Dad had always talked of retiring in St. Petersburg, but that poor Dad had ever had much to retire from. So that was decided. Wes and I were taking the eleven o'clock plane for St. Petersburg. The children would be staying with Mac and Lorna. I stayed up until midnight packing. And all the time I kept thinking, it can't be happening. It's too wonderful to be happening—

The next morning there were TV camera men at the airport. Like Wes and I were celebrities or something. Somebody handed me a bouquet of flowers. Then Wes and I were on the runway, and Lorna was shrieking not to worry about the kids, to have fun. And I kept blinking back my tears. It was the first time I'd ever been away from Michelle and Bruce.

But they'd be all right. It was good of Lorna and Mac to keep them. Everyone was so good. The other passengers on the plane knew all about us. When our lunch was brought to us, we found a small loving cup on Wes's tray. On it was inscribed, "Fortune favors the brave." Wes nuzzled for me to hide it, that he couldn't eat with it staring him in the face. I put it in my purse, telling myself I'd keep it forever as a souvenir of the most thrilling experience of my life.

**WE CHANGED** planes in Chicago, and on the second plane we didn't get any special treatment. In fact, nobody but the stewardess paid any attention to us at all. By the time the plane landed in Tampa, I was feeling pretty lonesome. But a cousin of Mr. Claidon's met us at the airport and drove us in his big car to St. Peters-

burg. He wanted to know about the fire, and in the excitement of telling it all again. I forgot to be homesick. Then I got to looking at the palm trees and the white, white sand and the blue, blue water, and I just had to keep pinching myself to make sure it was true.

I gave myself a lot of pinches after that. As Wes kept saying, we were having a second honeymoon. And I kept thinking it was a hundred times better than that honeymoon trip we had made to a friend's lake cabin fifteen and a half years ago, when Wes and I had been just a couple of awkward, self-conscious kids. Love grows right along with you, and the love Wes and I had forged through the years was strong and tender, thrilling and comfortable all at the same time.

Everyone was so friendly at the boardinghouse where we stayed. The people we met at the park and at the dances were friendly. Wes and I didn't feel a bit out of place. We spent a lot of time in the sun, so we could go home with a tan. And almost before we knew it, our ten days were up, and Mr. Claidon's cousin was driving us back to the airport.

"We're coming back someday," Wes said to me as the plane took off. "When the kids are grown up and married, we'll come back every winter, and fish from the pier and play shuffleboard—" I'd agreed—sure, we'd come back. But I was thinking that Wes's "someday" was far in the future. And anyway, I didn't want to hurry time. It went by fast enough, anyway. If we could only go back next winter, I thought. Take the children during Christmas vacation—

But you have to have money to do things like that. Money that Wes and I didn't have, that we never would have. Our fabulous vacation was already in the past. Oh, we'd always have the memory of it. But now we were returning to the hard work, the penny-pinching. Our moment of glory was over.

I'm ashamed to say it, but the truth was that I felt a twinge of jealousy at the sight of Mac and Lorna. Lorna was wearing a fur coat, and they were driving a newer car. Mac had taken the best of the six jobs offered him, and they were living high. Wes and I had had the glamour and excitement of a vacation in the sun. But Lorna and Mac's good luck would go on indefinitely.

It was a terrible way to feel, and I was all the more ashamed when I saw how excited they were to see us. In fact, they were too excited to talk. They just kept laughing to themselves as if they shared a huge joke we didn't know about. "I hope this is your day off, Mac," I said, as we whizzed down the familiar streets that were bleak with winter. "We wouldn't want you to take time off to meet us."

At this they both went into a gale of laughter. Wes grinned at me as he put his arm around my shoulder. He was so good. He'd never be guilty of any mean, petty thoughts. My love for him was making me a bigger person—I gazed out at the drab streets. It was home. "I can hardly wait to see the children!"

I cried. And that sent Mac and Lorna into another wave of laughter. I just couldn't figure it out.

**BUT** my bewilderment changed to fear as we approached our store. All those people crowding the walk—"Something's happened!" I shrieked. "You bet something's happened!" Mac's words came out like an explosion. "Look—look!"

I looked. But I couldn't believe it. That wasn't our shabby store front! This one was all brick and gleaming glass. And an enormous sign jutting out at a right angle—"Wes and Viv's"—"Why, that's us," I whispered. "Yes, that's us!"

"Sure, it's you!" Lorna was laughing and crying all at once. "Mr. Claidon has had crews working night and day to get it done. He had to get special permission from the unions—"

"And he rushed the building permit!" Mac had to tell it, too. "Just wait 'til you see!"

"Don't tell it all!" Lorna was out of the car, tugging at my arm. "Let them see for themselves!" I had to hang on to Wes for support. Flash bulbs popping in my face—A microphone thrust in front of me—A young man asking me if I'd say a few words—

"I can't," I whispered. "It's—too much." Then I was crying. Crying into the microphone, into the cameras, like a little kid who's had his faith in Santa Claus restored. So much—so much—Mr. Claidon was drying my eyes with his hankiechief, saying that this was just his way of saying thanks—saying that all the employees at his friendly furniture store were wishing us success and happiness—saying that it was people like Wes and me who made up the backbone of America. And I just stood there crying my heart out—My dreams had come true!

And I had entered wonderland. There was too much to realize all at once. Bruce wearing a new storm coat, hugging me while he clasped a new hockey stick and skates—Michelle looking adorable in her fur-trimmed coat—"And a whole closetful of dresses," she whispered to me. Friends and neighbors filling the store with their laughter—A store I didn't recognize. New counters, new shelves lined with canned goods. A new cash register and adding machine—And we hadn't seen it all, Lorna kept saying. Just wait until we went upstairs—

Hordes of people trooped up after us. Wes gave a low whistle. I couldn't make a sound. A big window had been cut in the side of the wall, so the south light could stream in. There were richly textured drapes—lush off-white carpeting. The kind of furniture I had dreamed of—a gorgeous sofa, low, deep chairs. Lamps and pictures, a new TV set. I walked through the rooms in a daze.

So much—A new panel truck, with "Wes and Viv's Grocery" painted on the side. When we tried to express our gratitude to Mr. Claidon, he only laughed. "It's young couples like you who make America. As long as we have young men and women with pride in their homes and faith in the future, we

need not fear. We'll always be strong."

There was more of it. And it was all printed in the paper, along with the picture of me crying my heart out. Wes and I appeared on Claidon's Friendly Furniture Store commercial on television, and although I was scared to death, Lorna said I did fine. "You'll probably get a night-club offer out of this," she added. And while I told her that was crazy, I found myself running to the mirror after she left, trying to imagine how I'd looked on TV.

I had gotten my hair cut and set at the beauty shop for the occasion. And the new styling did a lot for me, it really did. It gave me a young, smart look. I wondered if I'd be able to fix it that way myself. With so many people streaming into the store, I had to look my best.

**RICH** people came to our store now, friends of Mr. and Mrs. Claidon. Expensive foreign cars—gleaming limousines lined along our block. The bright chatter of women talking about the symphony and the Junior League—and wasn't this store the cutest little thing? And, oh, how they bought! Wes made a hurried trip to the market to replenish the stock of delicacies Mr. Claidon had put on our shelves. The original stock had been small, merely fronting the edge of the shelving. It has looked impressive, but that was all.

But there wasn't time to think about minor disappointments. Wes and I were too rushed to think. I sat at my tiny checkout counter, talking a blue streak as I sacked the fabulous orders. Talking about the fire, and how I had stumbled through the cold, protecting the baby inside my coat—Telling how Wes had forced the older boy to safety—"He wanted to run back in for his turtles," I'd say. "My husband had a terrible time with him."

The boy had wanted to carry out his turtles. Wes had told me that. So there was no harm in adding it to my story. There was no harm in saying I had protected the baby with my coat, although I couldn't remember whether I actually had or not. All those little details added drama. And like the newspaper reporters, I was saying what people wanted to hear.

And I was getting such a kick out of saying it. I had never before in my whole life been the center of attention. When I was small, other little girls had taken dancing lessons and appeared in recitals. In high school, the popular students had taken part in the class plays. Even my wedding had been undramatic—Wes and I had simply gone to city hall. Now, as I talked so easily to the rich women who crowded our store, I was satisfying a hunger that I guess is as deep as the hunger for food and drink and air to breathe—the hunger to be noticed as someone special, with a certain quality that lifts you out of the faceless crush of humanity. The desire to be a Somebody is a part of instinct. And now I was Somebody, and I was dizzy with excitement.

I kept on going to the beauty shop. After all, with business like it was, I could afford to spend a couple of dollars

a week on my hair. I wore the darling slack outfits I had found in my closet—tight-fitting capris and silk blouses with "Viv" embroidered on the collar. I was in the store practically all the time—I was so afraid I'd miss something. I was glad that our new delivery service kept Wes gone so much. He was courteous to our wealthy customers, but he wasn't one to talk much. It was more fun to have the store to myself.

**DURING** the brief lulls in trade, I'd fix my nails and massage lotion into my hands. I was so much more conscious of my skin now, so much more conscious of every phase of my appearance. But I was restless during these lulls. I wanted someone to talk to. It was in the middle of the third week of our fabulous luck that an unusually long lull was broken by the familiar tinkle of the bell. I looked up eagerly. But it was only Mrs. Tilden, who lived across the street.

"Do you have any ripe bananas, Viv?" she asked. Mrs. Tilden always bought the ripest bananas because she got them cheaper. Once I had saved them out for her, but lately I hadn't had time to fool with little things like that.

"I guess some of them are ripe," I said. "You can pick out the ones you want." I was getting off my stool. The bell was jingling again. A woman wearing a mink coat over slacks—a woman I hadn't seen before. Another wealthy customer. I leaned excitedly over the counter. "Good morning, I'm Viv—"

"Hi, Viv." She was glancing at the crammed shelves. "I heard you had simply everything, but I couldn't believe it. Imagine finding smoked oysters in this neighborhood!"

"We have caviar, too," I said happily. "You just tell me what you want, and I'll find it. And if you like, you can have delivery service. My husband goes out twice a day to the lake district."

Mrs. Tilden had turned her head and was giving me a funny look. As if it should make any difference to her that we were delivering our big orders. She lived right across the street. Besides, she never bought more than a couple of dollars' worth of groceries at a time. I couldn't help wishing she had chosen a different time to come in the store. She was wearing an old plaid macinaw over her housedress, and her gray hair was scraggly and uncombed. She could have fixed herself up a little. There was no sense in giving the impression that we were in the slums.

"How did you like Florida?" the new customer asked me, and I forgot Mrs. Tilden in the fun of comparing notes with a woman wearing mink. I reeled off the names of the places Wes and I had been. "A couple we just drove us to Sarasota," I said. "I just loved it. And imagine getting a tan in January. Mr. Claidon has done so much for us—so much more than we deserve."

The woman smiled. "I wouldn't say that, Viv. To rush into a burning house and save a woman and three children—no matter what Luke Claidon did for you, it wouldn't be enough."

"Well—" I was thinking that I hadn't actually gone in the house at all. But

then, Wes had gone. "Mrs. Claidon wanted to change the baby," I said. "Only, of course, I wouldn't let her. I just wrapped the little thing up in my coat—"

That was practically the way it had been. When you tell a story over and over, you make a few changes. You just can't help making them. I sat down on the stool to total up the big order. Just then Mrs. Tilden came up with the bananas. I hesitated, uncertain as to what to do. I hadn't started to ring up the rich woman's order. If she would suggest that Mrs. Tilden go ahead of her—

But she didn't suggest it. Well, Mrs. Tilden would have to wait. It was her own fault, anyway, for taking forever to pick out a few bananas. But it made me nervous, having her standing there looking awkward and ill at ease. I rang up an extra ten cents on one item, so I had to subtract ten cents from the next. I had to wait while a check was written, then, because the woman had decided to take the order home with her, make two trips carrying the groceries out to the car. I was so cold and jittery that I didn't think of apologizing to Mrs. Tilden for keeping her waiting. I just rang up the bananas and put them in a sack.

She walked out without a word, slamming the door so hard the new fixtures rattled. Mad—Well, I couldn't help it. The big orders had to come first. Wes and I couldn't stay in business on twenty-nine cents worth of bananas.

**BUT** just the same, I couldn't help remembering that Mrs. Tilden had traded with us ever since we'd opened the store. The next day I kept looking for her to drop in for her coffee cream. I set aside a bunch of bananas for her. But she didn't come in.

A lot of our old customers weren't coming in. And the ones who did come were different. They'd look around at our new, shining display cases, and they'd buy maybe a loaf of bread, and that would be all. The price of milk went up two cents all over town. But we heard a lot of grumbling—as if we were the only ones who had upped the price. "Fancy store, fancy prices," one woman snapped. Wes had waited on her, and I saw his mouth tighten. After the woman had slammed out, he turned and looked at me with such hurt in his eyes that my heart nearly broke.

"What's wrong with them, Viv?" he asked slowly. "Why aren't they our friends any more?"

"Most of them are our friends," I said stoutly. "A few are—" I had to say what I knew was the truth. "They're jealous, honey. They were all glad at first. But then they got to thinking it over, and wondering why all this good luck came our way."

The hurt in Wes's eyes deepened. "But why should they resent someone else's luck? We haven't taken anything away from them."

"I guess that's the way people are," I said thinly. Thinking that I was that way myself—that I'd been envious of Lorna's fur coat, of Mac's car. And they were my own relatives. If I could be

so mean and petty, how could I expect more of others? And besides, I'd been acting—well, almost snippy. All the excitement had gone to my head. And how can you expect customers to stay loyal to a—me a mob?

I had time to think now, time to be ashamed. The golden gleam of our luck was starting to tarnish. Mr. Kent, who owned the store building, came over to talk to us. He talked and talked, but what it all boiled down to was the fact that he'd have to raise the rent. "I hate to do it," he said. "But my property taxes have shot up, and my insurance rates along with it. When several thousand dollars worth of improvements are put into a building, the assessment goes up. There's no way of getting around it."

"No," Wes said, "I guess there isn't." His shoulders were sagging. For the first time in our marriage, he looked beat. To anyone as good as Wes, the knowledge of the world's pettiness comes as a terrible blow. And I knew he was wondering, as I was wondering, how we were going to do enough extra business to make up for the increase in the rent.

The rich friends of the Claidons had practically deserted us. Now that the novelty had worn off, there was no reason for them to drive miles out of their way to trade with us. We took the smoked oysters and all the other delicacies off the shelves and stocked them in the basement. Our regular customers didn't go in for glazed nuts and exotic soups. And what we had to have were our regular customers, who had bought from us for years.

Only we didn't get them. There was still the trickle of the curious. But you can't keep a grocery business going on that spotty kind of trade. We needed the folks who came in day after day, the folks who would stop and chat awhile, the ones we had regarded as our friends. But a housewife who doesn't mind running into the neighborhood store without bothering to fix up isn't going to feel the same about entering a plush, shiny place where some rich woman may look her over. There were some who were in awe of us now. There were plenty of others who were envious, who called me Mrs. Fancypants behind my back. And there were still others, like Mrs. Tilden, who my high-hat attitude had driven away. Being sorry and ashamed didn't help matters. The question was, what were Wes and I going to do about it?

**WE TRIED** everything. We tried messing up the store a little, so it would look more homey. We painted our specials on the windows. I attended the meetings of the Girl Scout mothers. We invited a bunch of men over for poker. We got a few of our steady customers back. But there just weren't enough of them for us to make a profit.

In February we broke even. But by March the last trickle of the curious was over with, and we went in the hole. We ate the delicacies we couldn't sell to our customers. Imagine eating caviar when you're sick with worry over making ends meet. It was the craziest thing I'd ever heard of. The whole thing had been

crazy—The fire—The Florida trip.

That was the cold, hard truth that Wes and I had to face. The whole thing had been a kind of stunt. Mr. Claidon had been sharp enough to see that he could reward us in a splashy way that would mean valuable publicity for him. When you came right down to it, Wes and I hadn't done anything worthy of a reward. We had known that in the beginning. But we had let others turn our heads with excited hopes, twist our sense of values.

We had listened to Mac and Lorna, when we should have listened to our own common sense. They had helped push us into this situation, but now they weren't around to help pick up the pieces. Mac had gotten huffy when Wes asked for a little money on their account. And since then they'd stayed away.

Wes tried to smooth it over by saying that Mac just didn't realize we weren't rolling in money. Even if we had been, we would still have had the right to ask for what was due us. I mean, how crazy can people get?

They can get plenty crazy. The pay-off came in April, right after Easter. There had been some funny looking characters hanging around the store, and Wes had gotten permission to buy a gun. We knew the whole city still had the notion we were making money hand over fist. Didn't we have the grandest neighborhood grocery in town? Weren't we driving our new white panel truck, with "Wes and Viv's" splashed all over it? How could we help but be making money?

As Wes said, we were ripe for a hold-up. He had stopped bowling so he wouldn't have to leave me alone in the store at night. I had a hunch that the pleasure had gone out of bowling one night a week, anyway. Our few simple pleasures were gone, and there were no new ones to take their place. Instead we had the grinding worry of how we were going to stay in business.

The night it happened, Wes had talked cheerfully. Business always picked up in the spring. Families would take a drive, and then stop for ice cream and soft drinks. I began to feel a little hopeful myself. There's so much going on in the world. People forget what's gone before. If we could get through the next month or so, we'd be able to get back on our feet.

**THEN**, right before closing time, it happened. Wes was in the back room checking the locks when the three teen-age boys came in. I smiled at them. I like kids, and at first glance these three seemed to be typical teen-agers. Then I felt my smile disappear and fear chill my spine. The way they were looking at me, with eyes as hard as agates, their faces tight with the merciless cruelty of youth. "Okay," one of them said, "let's have it. Keep your lip buttoned, and hand it over."

"You—mean—the money?" My shrill, shaky question jolted them into action. The one who had spoken was behind the counter, wrenching my arms behind my back. "I got a knife here, lady—I can fix you up so you won't like looking at yourself—" Paralyzed with terror, I

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• • •

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saw one of them scooping the bills out of the register while the third one stood guard. My only coherent thought was the desperate wish that Wes would stay in the back. Let them take the money—

The one who was standing guard whirled, and I heard Wes's roar. The knife blade flashed in front of my eyes, and my captor yelled, "One move, and she gets it!" The sound of footsteps—running—the knife dropping, hands releasing me—I was crumpled on the floor, while the world shattered into one explosive blast—

Wes had shot the boy who had held me at knife point. There was the horror of thinking he had killed him. Wes rode along to the hospital in the ambulance, pushing his way to the curb through the crowd of the curious who can appear at any hour of the day or night when there is something going on. And as I saw their faces, contemplating in the white arc of our flashy neon sign, and heard the noisy explanations that the kid was from the neighborhood—only sixteen years old—I knew that Wes and I had reached the end of the line.

I had learned more about life in the past three months than I had ever learned in all my previous thirty-six years. I had learned more than Wes had. But maybe that was because I wasn't as good a person in the beginning. Wes didn't know what it was to be envious. But I did. And so the wave of hate against us was easier for me to understand.

The papers played it up—"Ex-hero Shoots Teen-ager!" What kind of a heading is that? Could anything have been more unfair? Those kids had been robbing us! The one Wes shot had threatened to cut me up. If his two companions hadn't turned tail, he would

have done it. But people weren't interested in all that. What they were interested in was the fact that a man who had gotten his head swelled over his golden streak of luck was so darned anxious to hang onto every cent that he shot down sixteen-year-old fatherless kids who lived right in the neighborhood.

NOW it was the boy's mother who was written up in the paper, saying how she was a poor widow who had never expected any breaks, but who just wanted to bring her children up right. I don't suppose she ever said such a thing. But papers know what their readers want. The reporters even got Mr. Claidon in on it, and quoted him as saying he was "terribly disappointed." Whether he really said this or not, I don't know. But it didn't really matter by then.

Wes was so shaken up over the shooting that he nearly had a breakdown. "I could have scared him into dropping that knife," he said over and over. "I didn't think—"

He hadn't really thought the morning he rushed into that big mansion and helped save those three children. He had just done it. He hadn't deserved any special credit for that, any more than he deserved the condemnation for pulling out his gun and shooting. In a crisis, you act first and think later. But nobody cared about that. They just condemned Wes.

We moved out that month. We had to. There wasn't a chance of selling the business. We took the stock, including all the pickled onions and the caviar, and our fancy furniture. The carpeting and all the built-ins had to be left. We sold the white truck and used the money to pay down on a small

grocery store in a town a hundred miles south of the city. We call our new store "The Little Grocery" and our customers seem to understand that Wes and I are just little people who are working hard for what they get.

Mac and Lorna are our friends again. Mac had lost his big-paying job the day before the holdup. As long as he had to lose it I'm glad he lost it that day so he couldn't put the blame on the shooting. We don't see much of them—they're still in the city—but at least there's no hard feelings. I still think they could have paid us what they owed when they were ruling high but I don't say anything to Wes about it. I don't want any quarreling over relatives. They're only human like everybody else.

I keep the loving cup that Wes was given on the plane in a drawer. Every once in a while I take it out and read the motto "Fortune Favors the Brave." I know now what bravery is. Bravery is made up of the small humdrum tasks, the constant plugging. That's real bravery. That's the kind of bravery that is rewarded with respect.

And the respect and admiration that are earned don't turn your head. It's the sudden golden streak of luck that swells your ego and makes you eager for the spotlight. At least, that's what it did to me. I got the crazy notion that life was one big bubble and that I was fate's darling. Instead of trying to overcome the human resentment that others have when someone else gets the breaks, I fostered it. So how can I blame others for what happened, when I was so much to blame myself?

Wes was right all along. The success that is reached through hard work is the only kind that counts. Believe me, I know that now. **• THE END**

## Open House for the Boys

(Continued from page 16)

block beyond the bus line, and every evening I'd walk to meet Mom, starting so early in my eagerness to have her home that I'd sometimes have to wait for three or four buses before she finally came.

I'd run and throw my arms around her. She'd kiss me, and as we walked home, she'd tell me about her day. Every little thing she told me was interesting to me—how much cash she took in, the woman who started hollering because she thought she had been shortchanged. She even told me, sometimes, about some man trying to date her. We'd laugh together about that. We both knew how it had been between her and Daddy, right until the moment he died with the words, "Alice, dear," on his lips. We knew there'd never be another man for her.

I'd have the supper ready, but in the morning she'd prepare breakfast so I could fuss with myself, getting ready for school.

"You can't disappoint the boys," she'd say with a laugh.

She seemed to think that all the boys in school were crazy about me, and it

was just a question of my choosing between them. I'd laugh and pretend she was right. What was the use of telling her that mostly I walked along the halls alone, except for a couple of girl friends who weren't much, that nobody in school paid the slightest attention to me? Not a single boy had ever asked me for a date.

Mom looked at me with loving eyes, and I guess to her my cuteness—because that was all it was—took on the glow of beauty. I was small and well-curled. My freckled nose turned up, and my blue eyes were round and kind of surprised looking. My hair was thick and reddish-blond, with a bit of natural curl. Maybe I'd felt sater of myself—if I'd bubbled instead of keeping my high spirits bottled up inside me—the other kids would have noticed and liked me. But the years when my dying father was my only companion had left me shy and awkward.

Still, I wasn't unhappy or really lonely till Mom went on night shift, from four till midnight. She had worked for Mr. Raleigh for years, and she explained to me how it was.

"He's getting along in years, and he

has in take it easier. I'm the only cashier working for him he will trust to run things at night when he isn't there. So it's an honor that he's asked me to work nights, honey, and besides, it means a nice raise. We're going to need more money so you can have the nice things a girl should have when she starts dating." She smiled fondly at me. "Dating's only around the corner for you, whether you realize it or not."

I couldn't hide my dismay. I wasn't thinking about dating right then. All I was thinking was of how lonely it would be with Mom working six nights a week.

She put an arm around my waist. "Not every mother could trust a girl your age to be alone in the evenings," she said. "I'm proud that I can trust you." I knew she was trying to make me feel better, and in a way I did. She went on to tell me how careful I must be not to open the door at night. "And you can telephone the Harpers if anything ever happens to frighten you," she told me.

"I'll be all right, Mom," I choked out, because I didn't want to make her unhappy. I'd have to be plenty frightened to call the Harpers, I thought. They were our nearest neighbors, a grim-faced, elderly couple who had never tried to be friendly. They'd always acted as though



Daddy's sickness were a sin, though they went to church all the time and, I suppose, considered themselves good Christians.

**AFTER** Mom started working nights, I tried to keep my spirits up, but it was no use. Lots of nights I cried from loneliness. If school had been any fun, it would have been different. But with only a couple of creepy girl friends, as left out of things as I was, I was miserable there, too. If only a miracle would happen and some boy would notice me! If I could date one or two nights a week, I wouldn't mind the other nights at all. I could see myself at a party, gay and laughing, surrounded by people. Not lonely at all. I could see a boy, a special boy, looking into my eyes, touching my cheek with a rough-gentle hand, and telling me I was the most.

Dreams, silly daydreams—and then one day it happened. It was Saturday afternoon, and I'd walked to the bus with Mom. I was just turning in the gate when a car rattled along behind me. I could tell without looking that it was a kid's car, and instinctively I looked around. Sure enough, it was a cut-down job with no top. There were two boys and a girl in it. The boys were juniors in the same school I went to. I knew them by sight, but not by name. I knew the girl, though. She was Gale Wisnom, a soph like myself. Not that we were friends, of course. She was a real live wire—the kind of girl who would be cruising around with two boys all to herself.

The car slowed, and one of the boys whistled. I felt my whole body flush with embarrassment. It was a warm fall day, and all I was wearing was shorts and a halter. As I've already said, I'm the small-boned, curvy type, and all I could think of now was my legs and bosom. Ours was a very quiet street, or I wouldn't have gone out that way. Quickly, I got through the gate and closed it behind me.

"Hi, Beth!" Gale called. "You live out here?"

So she knew my name, anyway. "Yes," I said, nodding my head vigorously because I couldn't think of anything else to say.

"How about taking a little ride with us?" one of the boys said.

"Oh, I couldn't," I said. "I mean—I was so excited and confused I didn't know what I meant."

"You can tell your mother we'll have you back in a half-hour," he said.

"Th—that's the trouble. My mother isn't here," I explained. "She's just left for work. She—she works till midnight." I added, just for something to say.

"Your dad around?"

"No. He's—not living."

There was a silence, and then the boy said, "You mean you're all alone here till midnight?"

I nodded my head.

"Then come on—hop in. There's nothing to keep you from taking a ride."

"I'd—better not," I said. "I'm not dressed, and—"

"We'll come in and wait while you put on something," he said.

"Sure," Gale said and jumped out

of the car. Before I knew it, all three kids were in the house with me. Gale followed me into my bedroom, where I slipped on a skirt and blouse.

"Ski really goes for you," Gale said, lighting a cigarette. I was nervous about her smoking in the house, because I knew Mom wouldn't approve, but I wasn't so nervous my mind didn't catch on the boy's name and wonder about it. "Ski Nelson," Gale said. "He's a real big man around school, in case you didn't know. The other guy's mine," she went on. "Pete Spencer."

We went back to the living room, and both boys were smoking, too. I'd have to remember to air the house out good. Not that I wanted to deceive Mom. I'd tell her some kids had dropped by, and I'd gone for a ride—she'd love it that I'd had some fun. But she was old-fashioned, like most mothers. She might think they weren't very nice if she knew they smoked, and she'd be worried about me.

"You got any good records?" Pete asked. He was looking at the little record player Mom had bought me for my birthday.

"I'm afraid not," I said. Mom had bought me a couple of albums when she got the record player, but I knew these kids would think they were corny.

"That's all right," Ski said. "We can bring over some of our own records next time."

Next time. The words seemed to explode inside of me. There was going to be a next time—this wasn't just an accident!

"This is a cute little place," Ski went on. "I guess you and your boy friend have it pretty cozy here in the evenings, all by yourselves."

My cheeks felt as if they were being seared. I wanted to say that I didn't even have a boy friend, but I couldn't get a word out.

"Man, what a setup," Gale said. "Every time Pete and I park for a minute, I'm afraid we're going to get picked up. You've really got it made, kid."

**WE ALL** left the house then. Pete and Gale got in the back seat of the car. I climbed in beside Ski. We were off with a roar, and soon we were out in the country. Out of the corner of my eye I saw that Pete and Gale were all cuddled up.

"How chummy are you and this boy friend of yours?" Ski asked me. "Going steady?"

I could tell him now. "I don't have a boy friend."

"Oh, no?" He gave me a pleased grin and reached out a big arm. As if he were moving a doll, he pulled me over against him. For the very first time in my life I was riding along snuggled up against a boy. And what a boy! I'd never even dared to dream of such a gorgeous guy. He was big, with blond hair and blue eyes and real nice features. He was full of fun and up on everything—the latest songs, the latest slang and jokes. He seemed to have money, too, because when we stopped at a drive-in, he insisted on paying for everybody's coke.

After the drive-in he pulled the car off the road. Gale and Pete started some

real heavy smooching now, but I forgot all about them as Ski put his arm around my shoulder and slowly drew me up against him. When he put his hand at the back of my head and started to draw my face up to his, I thought my heart was going to burst out of my chest, the way it was thudding. He was going to kiss me, and scared as I was, I had no will to try to get away from him.

All of a sudden there was a movement in the back seat. "Break it up," Pete said urgently. "The cops—"

With a muttered, "Damn," Ski let me go and turned to the wheel. He pretended to be studying something on the dashboard as a highway patrol car cruised slowly by.

"Anything wrong?" one of the officers yelled.

"No. I guess not," Ski said, starting the car.

"Okay, get going!" the patrolman yelled back.

"Damn cops—they won't let you park anywhere for a minute," Ski grumbled. Pete and Gale joined in Ski's complaints. I was burning with shame, but kind of excited, too. For the first time I was like other teen-agers. I knew what it was like to feel pushed around by adults. I'd never felt that way before, because I'd never done anything like other kids.

"Why don't they go out and catch a bank robber, or something, instead of picking on us?" I added my voice to the others. When they all laughed in approval, I had a wonderful feeling of being a part of them, of being young and alive.

"I'll see you soon," Ski told me huskily when he dropped me off at my house. Pete and Gale called friendly good-bys as I ran up the path. When I reached the front door, I turned and waved gaily.

"Good-by! See you soon!" I yelled. I was so excited I couldn't eat the stew that I was supposed to warm up for supper. I didn't want Mom to know I hadn't eaten, though, so I did a very wicked thing. I wrapped up a portion of the stew and put it into the garbage can. I'd been brought up to think of waste as a sin. But what else could I do, I defended myself.

I had decided not to tell Mom about my new friends, you see. At first, I'd felt that I could hardly wait to tell her, but when I'd thought it over I'd realized that I couldn't tell her the whole story. I couldn't tell her about the police yelling at us, for instance, and I couldn't tell her about Ski putting his arm around me and almost kissing me. And if I started holding back things, I was likely to get all mixed up. Besides, she might decide she didn't even want me taking a ride with kids she didn't know. No, I wouldn't say anything for now. I'd wait till I knew Ski and the others better—till I could tell her more about them, and perhaps arrange for her to meet them.

At school Monday, Gale greeted me with a warm, "Hi, Beth," and introduced me to two girls she was with. They were pretty, well-dressed girls named Jean and Roz. As we stood there in the hall, talking together, every boy that passed gave us the eye. Some stopped to talk, and again I was intro-

duced. There was no doubt about it—I was in!

I DIDN'T see much of Ski, because he was a junior, but he yelled a greeting across the schoolyard at noon. He and some boys were piling into his car, evidently to have lunch at some drive-in.

A couple of days passed before Ski went out of his way to look me up. "I just wanted to let you know I hadn't forgotten you, honey," he said. "You haven't forgotten me, have you?"

"No," I told him breathlessly. "We'll get together real soon, doll," he said. Then he strode away and joined some junior boys. I could understand that at school he wanted to be with his own classmates. I wondered if he meant he was going to ask me for a date before long. If he did, I'd have to ask Mom if I could go. She'd let me, I decided. I was almost sixteen. Most girls my age had been dating for a year, at least.

Taking me out wasn't what Ski had had in mind, though. About eight o'clock on Friday night I heard a commotion outside, then there was a pounding on the door. At first I was frightened, then I recognized Gale's laughter and Ski's voice. "Hey, open up—you've got company!"

So surprised I hardly knew what I was doing, I opened the door, and in trooped so many kids I couldn't count them at the time. Later I knew there were seven of them. Counting Ski and myself as a couple, there were four couples.

"We're gonna have a party! We're gonna have a party!" Pete sang, and he began to prance around the room, waving a carton of beer. The other kids fell into step, forming sort of a conga line. A couple of the boys were holding up cartons of beer, and the girls had potato chips or record albums. "We're gonna have a party—" Ski got me by the waist and pulled me into the line.

And all of a sudden something came over me. All thought of Mom, and how she'd disapprove of the boys drinking beer in her house, ran right out of my mind. I felt as if I'd been drinking myself. I just went wild with excitement. This was a surprise party—a surprise party for me! My friends actually thought that much of me.

"We're gonna have a party! We're gonna have a party!" Now I was chanting as loudly as anyone. I was prancing and swaying, and Ski's hand at my waist was sending thrills all through me.

Finally the line broke up. "Let's put on some records!" Pete shouted. The girls—Gale and Jean and Roz—had all brought records, the very latest hits. They stacked them up on my little record player, and now the wild beat of rock 'n' roll added to my excitement.

The boys opened the beer. I could have gotten myself a coke from the frig, but I didn't. "Sure my girl drinks beer," Ski said proudly, and do you think I'd have let him down?

"I don't know how to swing," I had to admit, when he wanted me to dance.

"Sure, you do," he said. And somehow, with him holding my hands and

the beer making me feel as if I could fly if I wanted to, I found myself swinging right along with the others. I hadn't known it was possible to have so much fun.

After a while I began to get worried, though. We had no neighbors on one side, and a vacant lot stood between us and the Harpers. Still, the kids were creating a regular bedlam now. I couldn't risk Mom finding out about this party. I knew it wasn't the kind of party she'd approve of. She was old-fashioned and just wouldn't understand that this was the way kids had fun these days. I was just getting ready to ask Ski if he could quiet things down when I noticed that they had quieted by themselves. Someone had turned off most of the lights, too. I could barely make out Pete and Gale in the big arm chair in the corner. She was on his lap, and—

"Come on, baby. Let's find us a cozy spot," Ski whispered in my ear. His arm was around me, and in a daze I let him lead me to a corner of the sofa. There was another couple in other corner, but somebody had turned off another lamp, and it was so dark now I couldn't see who it was. Ski's arms were around me, his mouth was on mine. My heart was rocking with the excitement of my first kiss.

But then I had to pull my mouth away from his. I had to whisper, "No, Ski. Please—"

He laughed softly. "All right, baby." He nuzzled my ear and whispered softly, "You really are a baby, aren't you? Well, leave it to Big Daddy—he'll see that you grow up—"

I was kind of frightened by his last remark, but from then on he behaved himself, so soon I felt myself relaxing. He just held me very gently, and let his lips stray over my face and throat. He whispered sweet, adoring words that made me feel like the most beloved person in the world. I knew that in different parts of the room the other couples were clinging to each other just as lovingly, and it didn't seem wrong.

"This is what we were born for," Ski was whispering, and I knew he was right.

SO SOON I could hardly believe it, the hall clock struck eleven.

"Ski, my mother will be home in a little over an hour. She—she mustn't know you kids have been here," I told him.

"Of course not," he said. Then he raised his voice. "Hey, you lovers, break it up. We've got to straighten this place up before Beth's old lady gets home."

A boy groaned, and a girl giggled. "Yeah, it would be silly to kill the goose that lays the golden egg—"

Lights were snapped on. Ski managed what he called the "mopping up operations." And he managed them so well that inside a half-hour you'd never have known I'd had even a single sneeze. Beer cans were put back in the cartons, cigarette butts emptied into paper bags, and all were taken out to the cars. I ran the vacuum while Gale opened the windows and doors to let in the fresh air. Pillows were plumped up, finger marks wiped off the furniture. I felt guilty that I was

deceiving my mother, yet there was an exciting, conspiratorial feeling, too, in being part of a crowd of teen-agers that was working together for a mutual aim. I was one of the gang.

The kids made me feel plenty important, too, as they said their good-bys. "Thanks for a real cool evening, Beth." That was Pete.

"The hostess with the mostest," another kid called me.

Ski lingered a moment after the others were gone. He put his hand under my chin and raised my lips to his. He gave me a soft kiss, then he said soberly, "Better check everything again, doll-baby, to be sure your mother doesn't find anything wrong. I wouldn't want the gang to lose this setup, and I wouldn't want to lose you."

I did as he said. Only now that I was alone, my feeling of guilt was a lot worse. Mom and I had always been so close. I loved her so much, and she was working hard to keep up a home for me. How wrong it was of me to turn that home into a "party pad," as one of the kids had called it. I almost made up my mind to tell her when she came home.

Then I began to think of what Ski had said—he wouldn't want to lose this setup for his friends. He'd said he wouldn't want to lose me, either, but he'd said the two almost as if they were one. I knew he'd figure I was a baby—a Mama's little girl—if I ended all this for us. I thought of his arms around me in the dark—the sweetness of his lips. And I thought of how all the kids treated me as if I were someone wonderful—almost a leader. I couldn't go back to being nobody. Besides—

Besides, I've never had any fun like other girls. I burn with shame now when I recall how I ended up trying to justify myself. When other girls had been starting to date, I'd been nursing my father. I couldn't go any place, couldn't have anyone in. If it hadn't been for that, I'd have gotten off on the right foot in high school—I wouldn't have had to seek popularity—it would have come to me on my own terms.

Yes, I actually ended up putting the blame for what I was doing on my poor dead father. And I did such a good job of convincing myself that my conscience bothered me less and less as time went on. I was one of the most popular girls in school now. Oh, maybe not with the big brain element, or the kids who went in for a lot of school activities, but that didn't bother me. I had my own crowd—the fun crowd—and it kept growing as word got around there were no chaperons. A couple of times a week we'd throw a real blast.

I was scared the night a couple of new boys showed up with a bottle of whiskey. They passed it around, and it seemed to go to everyone's head a lot faster than the beer. I took a sip myself when Ski coaxed me to, but it almost made me sick. The other girls didn't seem to like it, either, but the boys had no trouble getting it down.

"Fire water heap good," Pete said, smacking his lips. Then he began to do an Indian dance around the room, and pretty soon we all joined in. Oh, it was

fun, but I was worried. Things seemed to be getting out of hand. The boys were scuffling around now, and they finally upset a table. I caught the lamp just in time.

"Ski," I said, giving him a frantic look. I loved him then, for the way he took charge. "All right, you guys, simmer down," he ordered. "I don't intend to have my girl friend's house wrecked."

His girl friend—oh, what sweet words. The kids got quieter then, and after a while most of the lights were turned off. Ski and I began to smuggle—

He was getting awfully hard to manage. I had to keep pushing his hands away. But they wouldn't stop away.

"You've got to stop teasing me like this," he whispered hoarsely. "Isn't there some room where we can be alone?"

"No," I told him. "No, Ski. I just can't."

"Everyone else does. Why should we be different?"

"They don't," I said. "I'm sure they don't. The girls wouldn't."

"Look around you," he urged.

I shook my head. I didn't want to look. I was afraid of what I would see. If I didn't see it, I didn't have to believe it. I told myself.

WHEN Mom came home, I had anxious moments, and when I was with her in the mornings and on her days off. What if we should slip up in some way? I wasn't just afraid of being found out—I was afraid of hurting her, too. And, oh, she would be so terribly hurt if she found out how I'd been deceiving her.

I got to be a nervous wreck from worry. And one Sunday morning it happened. Mom came out of the bathroom holding a cigarette butt between her fingers. Her small face, that was so like my own, was set in anxious lines.

"I found this in the bathroom wastebasket," she said. "What does it mean, Beth? I want the truth. Have you had a boy in the house while I've been at work? More than once I've thought I smelled smoke. Then I figured it was clinging to my clothes, from the huskies."

My mind went blank with shock. I stood there dumbly, staring at that butt in her hand. Was it all going to end like this—no more fun, no more being somebody, Mom all broken up and, probably not letting me have anything more to do with Ski—

No, I had to think of something—anything—

And out it came, the Big Lie. "I'm sorry, Mom. I know you don't want me to smoke. But since I've been alone in the evenings it—sort of keeps me company. I'll give it up, though—"

Her dear face just crumpled. "Oh, my poor baby, don't feel ashamed," she said. "I understand, and I'm sorry things have to be the way they are for you." She took me in her arms, and I felt her tears on my cheek. I began to cry, too, from love and guilt, and all the pent-up emotions of the last few weeks. We consoled each other. I promised not to smoke any more. And in my heart I made a resolution.

I was going to stop turning my moth-

er's home into a party pad for a bunch of wild kids. That was what they were. I admitted to myself, I didn't include Ski, of course. I knew by now he didn't have a happy home life, with his parents battling all the time, so that explained why he tried to have what fun he could. But we'd both be better off without the rest of the gang, and I had a feeling I could make him see that.

Anyway, seeing how upset my mother was, just at the idea of my smoking, I knew I was through doing anything behind her back. Monday I'd tell Ski just how I felt. We were so close now I wasn't afraid to talk to him.

He still didn't pay much attention to me at school. He'd explained that the guys would kid him for going after a sophomore. But when I went up to him Monday noon, he gave me one of his cute grins.

"How's my girl?" he whispered.

"Fine," I told him. Then I hurtled out. "Ski, we've got to stop the partying at my house," I told him about Mom and the cigarette butt. He listened, frowning slightly. Then he put his hand on my arm, right there in the main corridor, and he said, "Sure, Beth, we'll knock it off if it's upsetting you that much. I already arranged a little blast for tomorrow night, but that'll be the last. Okay?"

What could I say but, "Okay."

Well, it didn't turn out to be a little blast. It was Pete's birthday, and the kids had worked up a real party—refreshments and plenty of beer, a stack of new records. I couldn't get in the party spirit, though. I was too nervous. Ski took me in his arms, and I tried to dance, but I couldn't even keep step or relax.

THEN I found out that Ski hadn't taken me seriously when I'd told him that this had to be the last party at my house. That's why he'd taken it so well.

"Hey, relax," he said, when he saw how nervous I was. "I told the guys to watch their butts tonight—told them if anybody got careless, we wouldn't be able to party here again—"

"We can't, anyway. This has to be the very last time," I told him.

He pulled me closer. "You don't mean that, baby."

"I do," I told him frantically. I—

I only had time to notice how he was scowling, then there was a loud commotion at the door. While I was wondering what to do, someone threw the door open and in charged a mob of kids. I recognized them right away as the roughest element in school, Mickey Fair was their leader. He was a short boy with a bull-like body and an ugly leer on his knife-scarred face. He'd been in lots of trouble, and it was as plain as it could be that he was looking for trouble now.

"So this is the party pad I've been hearing about," he said, looking around. "All right, boys and girls, have yourselves a time!" he shouted at the kids who had come with him. He was daring anyone to try to stop them.

I was scared half to death, but I managed to speak up. "I'll have to ask you

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to leave, please. The—the party was just breaking up, anyway—

"You got it all wrong, chick," he told me tauntingly. "The party's just getting started."

I turned frantically to Ski. "Make them get out, Ski," I whispered. "You and your friends—"

He shook his head. "Those guys are real rough. We wouldn't have a chance against them."

"You could try—"

"Why should we?" he said challengingly. "You're kicking us out after tonight, anyway."

My heart seemed to fall into the pit of my stomach. Was that all I meant to him and the others? After all the good times they'd had at my house—all the risks I'd run for them—not a one of them would lift a hand now to protect my home from these hoodlums.

"You get out of here!" I screamed at Mickey in sick rage.

He only laughed at me. And I had to stand there helplessly while his gang took over my house.

"All I want is to be alone with my honey," one of the boys said. And he and a drunken girl staggered toward my bedroom. A few minutes later another girl threw a beer bottle at a boy, and it crashed through the big side window.

I went wild then. "If you're not all out of here in five minutes, I'll call the police!" I shrieked.

I don't know if I would have or not, because just then the most unexpected thing in the world happened. The door burst open, and I was staring at Mom!

My guilt flooded over me. I felt as if I were drowning in it.

"Mama," I said numbly. "Oh, Mama—" Then I was crying and trying to explain. Mickey and his crowd paid no attention. A girl was dancing on the dining room table—

Mom seemed as numb as I felt. She kept staring around as if she couldn't believe what she saw. Then she noticed the broken window. She threw down her bag and went over to it—

AND that's when the police came. The Harpers had called them, we found out later, when they'd heard the crash of glass. Mom answered their knock, and one of them said, "This is a nice party you got going here, lady. Plenty of booze for your teen-age guests, I see. And no telling what we'll find in the bedrooms. Take a look, Gary."

Of course, they found the couple that had gone off by themselves. Mom's surprise was terrible to see. But the police only thought she was putting it on to fool them.

"They forced their way in," she said. Apparently that was all she had gotten out of my explanation. "Tell them, Beth—tell them that I was at work and you were here by yourself and they forced their way in."

"Mickey and his gang did. But the others—well, I knew they were coming," was all I could say.

"You're all coming down to the station," the officer said. "If these kids barged in here without an invitation, why didn't you call the police?" he asked Mom. He didn't give her any chance to answer. He didn't listen to a word I said, though I begged him frantically to believe that my mother knew nothing about what had been going on. We were all herded into police cars and taken down to police headquarters.

I paid with bitter tears that night for the mistake I had made in trying to buy popularity by turning my home into a party pad. I saw my good sweet mother browbeaten and humiliated before we were finally able to convince the police that she was not guilty of contributing

to the delinquency of minors at all.

Mickey and his gang were sent to the detention home. Ski and the others were released in their parents' custody. The police sergeant gave me a severe lecture, pointing out how my mother was working and trying to make a good home for me, and how I had let her down. He didn't stop till I was crying with shame. Then he said, "All right, go along now, and see that you behave yourself after this."

As Mom and I went home together, she told me why she'd left work early. She'd been worried ever since I told her that I'd been so lonely at night I'd taken up smoking. She'd finally told her boss she couldn't work nights any more. She'd been so upset when she told him that he'd told her to go right home. I felt even more ashamed now, knowing how concerned she'd been about me. And I cried all over again when we got back to the house and I saw what a mess it was, with the broken window and all.

"There now, we're going to clean this up, and then we're going to forget this whole thing," Mom told me.

I'm trying to forget, but it isn't easy. Every time I see Ski or Gale or one of those other kids around school, I remember. Because they want nothing to do with me now. I found out through one of my old girl friends that they actually blame me because they got in trouble!

Well, maybe I am to blame in a way, but just the same it hurts to be turned against like this—not that they ever were my friends. From now on I'm going to be sure that my friends like me for myself. And the way to make people like you is to be warm and friendly and interested in them. It will take practice, but I have lots of time. I have my whole life ahead of me.

• THE END

## How to Prevent Varicose Veins

(Continued from page 27)

veins and other blood vessel disorders near the surface of the skin can be prevented or controlled by the use of a few simple home procedures and remedies. In order to make proper use of the methods, medical men believe the individual must have reasonable knowledge about the cause of unsightly veins.

Varicose veins are among the most common of ailments. They develop when skin-surface veins fail to function in their job of pushing the blood back toward the heart. Most of the failure of the veins occur in the legs and thighs.

Veins have numerous valves to prevent blood from going backward in its upward journey to the heart. Frequently, because of strain, infection, and structural defects acquired during, before, or after birth, vein valves fail to close properly. Therefore, blood en route to the heart leaks out of the valve, backing up to prevent further movement of the blood supply.

When this happens, the veins will begin to enlarge and may expand many times their size. If the vein failure is prolonged, some of the veins become

twisted or tortuous, forming ugly-looking bluish masses. In time, some veins are permanently weakened and their valves no longer function, thus the individual has chronic trouble with varicose veins. Most of these varicosities form along the inside and back portion of the leg and thigh.

Women are troubled with varicose veins far more than men. Unfortunately, too, is the fact that feminine styles give a woman little or no opportunity to hide ugly varicosities. Although most women acquire varicose veins following childbirth, they do appear from overwork, injury, and disease. Even excessive body weight will cause the development of varicose veins.

One of the most common forms of these veins is known as "spider bursts." Women with fair or thin skin, and those who are overly plump, are more inclined to acquire this condition. A small blood vessel containing a cluster of attachments may suddenly overflow with blood, and the mass of vessels then shows through the skin. Frequently these unsightly veins disappear of their own ac-

cord. While doctors prefer to leave them alone, they can treat some of them successfully with chemical injections.

Sometimes an individual may suffer an inflammation of a vein. The condition is called phlebitis, and it is often painful. Soon after the vessel begins to heal, the vein and the skin above it turn brownish in color and then acquire the appearance of a bruise mark. Varicose veins have also been known to weaken surrounding tissue causing the skin surface to become subject to various breakdowns and infections.

Most varicose veins can be successfully treated by injection methods involving the introduction of a chemical substance into the vein which clots the blood, preventing the varicosity from spreading. The other, and more favored technique among doctors, is surgical stripping of the offending vein. This operation is simple and can be done in a medical office if necessary.

The physician gives a local anesthetic, usually Novocain, and makes two tiny incisions, above and below the unsightly section of the vein. A special wire then penetrates the vein, and the offending vessel is easily pulled out. There is usually no scar, and the person can walk about an hour after the operation. Once

this operation has been performed, the varicose vein does not reappear.

Medical men can also use such methods as skin planing and cosmetic camouflage to cover up ugly blood vessels. Nevertheless, the majority of doctors agree that it is much more preferable for the victim of varicose veins to use a series of home remedies before turning to injections and surgery for the treatment of their blood vessel disorders.

Among the many methods which you can use at home to prevent or control varicose veins, the following are most successful.

1. Get off your feet as often as you can. Lie down when you become tired and place a fluffy pillow under your legs and raise them higher than your head. Remain in this position for at least ten minutes and be as quiet as possible. Do this two or three times during the day.

2. If you must stand for long periods, move about. Don't remain in one spot. While standing, wiggle your toes and

do some tiptoe exercises. Try doing a little dance with your feet or hop about a few seconds on either foot during the day.

3. If you sit for a long time, try to get up on your feet from time to time and stretch them. Make yourself as tall as you can by raising up tiptoe. If you can't do this, have a small footstool handy, or any object which enables you to raise your legs and get them well off the floor. Keep your feet on the footstool at least 10 minutes at a time. Repeat the procedure frequently throughout the day.

4. Whether you are constantly sitting or on your feet, keep crossing your legs every hour or so and wiggle your ankles and feet or rock your body on your feet.

5. Avoid bruising your legs and thighs. Be especially careful if varicose veins have already appeared. If you cannot avoid bruises because of your chores, cover the affected area with a soft wrapper or binding.

6. People with varicose veins should

stay out of the hot sun and keep their skin covered and protected. Don't risk sunburn! It will invite more vein trouble and pain. Do not place heat pads or hot water bottles against enlarged veins.

7. Keep your thighs, legs, ankles, and feet soft and supple by use of a proper skin lotion. Apply daily.

8. Don't bathe too long in the tub or stay in a pool for more than 30 minutes at a time, not when varicose veins are large and painful.

9. Wear elastic bandages and stockings to help control the swelling of your varicose veins. Keep them on from the minute you get up until bedtime.

10. Keep your weight under control. This is important. Extra pounds make your blood vessels weaker and more tortuous and strain the heart. Slim people have less varicose veins.

Above all, consult your doctor when symptoms of varicose veins appear. If home remedies fail, your doctor can help you! • THE END

## Let Color Do Something for You

(Continued from page 25)

guided accordingly. Carry this excellent bit of female logic in your heart—when in doubt, choose the color that does something for you.

Beauty experts suggest that you match make-up to your skin rather than to your hair and eyes. This new theory was born because skin tones fall into two basic types: pink (skin ranging from alabaster to rosy) and yellow (skin ranging from golden to tan to rosy). Not all blondes have pink-toned skin, not all brunettes have yellow-toned skin. So the general rule for color selection of a base is this: girls with pink-toned skin should select light, rosy shades of base and powder; girls with yellow-toned skin should choose tan, beige, or olive shades. Use a neutral tone to play down a florid skin, or a rosy tone to pick up a sallow skin.

To find your skin color category, judge the tone of the skin on the inside of the arm. Pat a bit of foundation into a spot just above the wrist. Rub it lightly until it blends into the skin. If it matches, that's the base to use. If it doesn't, keep going. Samples are usually free at beauty counters, and so your experimentation will cost you nothing. Matching powder may be selected in the same way. Pat powder on a spot just above the foundation sample. Rub it into the skin. If the powder disappears, it is too light. If it stands out, the powder is too heavy. When color and weight are right, it blends in.

The three color groups in lipstick and rouge are: the true reds, which are most becoming; the blue-reds (from pink to winey tones); and the yellow-reds (from coral down to the tawny reds). If your skin lacks red, your choice of colors is great, for most shades are becoming. If your skin is fair and rosy, the blue-red color range is your best color. If your skin is olive, golden tan, or just golden, the clear reds are for you.

To test yourself for lipstick and rouge color, pinch the skin on the back of your hand near the wrist—pinch until it reddens. Rub rouge alongside it. Blend it in and compare it. The color which exactly matches the color of your own blood is your best color. To determine your best lipstick shade, turn back the lower lip so the color of the inner lip is visible. Lipstick that blends with or tones into the color of the inner lip will be best for you.

Whatever your skin tone is, generally lighter lipsticks are most becoming. High style or off-beat shades are for special effects and should be saved for evenings. Rouge should be color-coded to lipstick, but more delicate. Colored nail polish, of course, should match lipstick, though it may be paler or more intense.

The color of your eyes is a clue to your eyeshadow color. For brown, green, or hazel eyes, brown or green eyeshadow is your best choice. For blue or gray eyes, all shades of blue, gray, and violet are flattering. Eyebrow pencil and mascara are most enhancing when you choose a shade slightly darker than your own hair color.

Regardless of the color, know how to apply make-up for your type. Take plenty of time and you'll do a professional job, and your make-up will stand up well. Fix your face in the same kind of lighting under which you will wear it. Never combine yellow-reds and blue-reds. Stick to the same color family and remember different degrees and intensities go well together.

Here's how you use your make-up once you've settled on the right colors:

If your face is oval—the purpose of make-up and hairdo is to preserve the perfect oval, and therefore you cannot detract from it. Apply rouge on the high point of the cheek (formed when you smile). Blend it back and up, shading it off into foundation. Lipstick

follows the natural lipline. Keep eyebrows natural, but try for a nice arch. Place eyeshadow from the center of the upper lid, close to the lashes and blend it upward and outward. Apply mascara to the upper lashes only, from the center out. Retain the natural oval by brushing hair back and sweeping it off the temples. No curls, no fussiness, and don't dress the hair forward. A center part is lovely if your features are even.

If your face is square—work for softness and avoid harsh lines or angles. Elongate rouge by putting the deepest color on the highpoint of the cheek. Blend it up and then down over the jawline. Give your mouth fullness, make it seem large, generous. This minimizes the jawline. Avoid a straight line or an angle to the browline. Keep the browline gently curved, large and full. It can curve slightly downward. Create fullness and height in the hairdo on the side and top of the head and keep it close to the ears. Slant your part, have it high on the side. Steer clear of a bob with a bang and dress hair well back of the earline.

If your face is round—do not apply rouge in the round, but blend it from the center of the cheek up, over and back of the cheekbones then down and back over the jawline. Use a darker base at the rounded area of the jaw and blend it into lighter base. Make up eyebrows and lips to appear large, full, and free. Do not tweeze eyebrows straight or thin. Keep the eyebrows full, natural, and well-arched. Avoid a high bow on the lips—angle lipstick at the center curve. Create a hairdo that adds height and fullness over and above the ears and place the part directly over the eye. Keep hair close and behind the ears.

If your face is long—attempt to shorten the lines. Apply rouge in a circle on the highpoint of the cheek when you smile. Blend it backward and dab a bit on the chin, but go lightly here, and blend it in well. Apply lipstick to the natural lipline. Do not

point the mouth at the center or widen it. Your lipstick should streak across the mouth and be almost as full at the sides as it is in the center. Keep eyebrows perfectly natural—do not extend them. Do not arch them or pencil them too high. Keep hair close to the top of the head and avoid center parts or high curls. Comb hair back to allow light to give effect of fullness to the face. Build hair fullness at the temples.

Summer make-up covers the color spectrum. You may take your choice of brilliant make-up colors or pastels or combine more than one color for the lips. For a change, try orange for the outline, apricot pink for the filler. A darker shade used for outlining the lips, a lighter shade inside, makes thin lips look fuller. The reverse colors reduce full lips. Eye shadow goes wild with color—two or three tones look lovely. Use a lighter, softer tone over the entire eyelid, accent the lid from the lashline to the fold with a more brilliant or darker eyeshadow. Or you might try two colors of mascara, emerald green with royal blue for instance. If you do, use one color eyeshadow. Naturally, your foundation and powder should be light. Then you will have a more exotic effect.

Here are a few enchanting make-up suggestions which will reflect artistic ways with make-up:

**Blondes:** Coax the complexion to look blonder than it really is. Use an opaque foundation cream in a tube or lotion and use it wherever skin shows. If your dress is high-necked in front, bare in the back, coat the back to a one-color matte look by applying foundation over the back, shoulders, neck, or arms. Powder these parts but remove the excess with a tissue to protect your clothes. Here's the order of the new blonde look—ivory foundation, a light coating of a powder with a pale blue cast, lightly buffed off. Then a repowdering with ivory tinted powder and another buffing off of excess powder. If the eyes are blue, use the blue eyeshadow or shadows and blue mascara. Stroke the brows with alternate strokes of blue and gray. True pink lipstick and nail polish complete the picture.

**Redheads:** It is often necessary to hide freckles or a brunette-toned complexion. So completely block out with a complete foundation coverage. Don't stop at the jawline or neckline, but cover these areas with foundation, too. Choose an opaque foundation and

smooth it over the face and throat (behind the ears, back, and sides of the throat as well as the front). Powder over it and brush excess off. For a true matte finish, dip a sponge in water, wring it dry, and pat over the entire face and neck. Use a light foundation, then a coat of powder with a misty green tint, and repowder with a porcelain-tinted powder, a step lighter than the foundation color. Green eyeshadows and mascara, olive green and brown for the brows, tawny-orange lipstick and nail polish.

**Brunettes:** Your best choice is a beige foundation, a first coat of yellow-tinted powder, and a finishing coat of beige powder. Green eyeshadow, brown or black mascara, black or brown eyebrow pencil will brighten your coloring. True red for lips and fingertips is best. A brunette can vary her first powder to either a delicate blue or pink.

Selecting a new dress in a current color: don't try to force it to look well on you by changing your make-up colors. Try on a colored dress without make-up and if it doesn't look well on you give it the go-by. If it looks well on you without make-up, it will make you look smashing when you are all done up.

• THE END

## I Wanted My First Wife Back

(Continued from page 8)

I had other things on my mind this Saturday morning.

"Leave your shirt off and come here," she drawled invitingly.

"I'm going over to see Doug."

Her body tensed in instant anger. "Why don't you move back in with that kid and his mother? You spend more time there than you do here."

A swift longing shot through me. Cara couldn't know it, but she had put into words the thing I wanted most in the world. I'd have given ten years of my life if Betty would have taken me back.

"Now, Cara, I only see Doug on week ends," I said reasonably.

"What about last Friday night? And how about the Wednesday night before that?" Despite her sulky expression, she was as good looking a dame as you'd see anywhere. But the sight of her—red-haired and beautiful and full-bodied in her rose satin pajamas—failed to stir me.

"Last Friday was Doug's cub scout program, and the Wednesday before that was his seventh birthday. You don't expect me to pass up my son's birthday, do you?"

"The way you make over him, you'd think he was the only kid in the world."

"He is, for me."

She got up and put her arms around me. "You won't stay long, will you, Danny boy?" she asked in a coaxing voice. "This is too nice a day to let go to waste."

I felt like telling her I didn't consider a day spent with Doug and Betty a waste. And I could have told her that all her cuddling up to me wasn't doing any good, but I didn't. Cara is a temper

was no small matter, and I didn't want to set her off if I could help it.

"I can't promise anything," I told her. "It's almost noon now."

She pushed away from me, angry again. "Well, don't expect me to sit here with my knitting and wait for you. I may call up some of the crowd and have them in for a party."

I hadn't expected her to sit home alone. Cara is the kind of person who's never happy unless she's being seen and heard. She needs an audience like other people need peace and quiet. "Sounds like a good idea," I said and left quickly before she could get any more steam up.

As I drove to the house I'd once shared with Betty and Doug, all the misery of the past year backed up in my throat like bile. I had really made a mess of things. And there was no one to blame but myself.

I never could resist a pretty face or a lush figure. That's what had attracted me to Betty. There had been plenty before her, but she was the only one who had gotten under my skin and stayed there. Scared to death. I asked her to marry me.

The joy that leaped into her eyes was unmistakable, but she said lightly, "I didn't think you were the marrying kind."

"I didn't, either," I said shakily. "But you've got me hooked, baby. But good." "You really mean it then?"

I looked at her, and scared as I was, I knew that those honest gray eyes were the ones I wanted to see across the table from me every day of the week. And I knew that soft, liking voice was the one I wanted to listen to the rest

of my life. "I really mean it," I told her, and my voice was steady this time.

For the first two years there was no one for me but Betty. I hadn't suddenly gone blind. I still had an eye for a pretty face or figure, but I was satisfied just to look. Then gradually marriage grew a little stale for me. Betty was pregnant with Doug, and after he was born, she changed. Her curves melted off, and it was a lendown to come home from an office full of carefully groomed and polished career girls to a wife who was too busy now to keep up her hair and face the way she had before. Her slacks hung loosely on the once lush body, and her dark hair often needed combing. When I'd reach for her and kiss her pale lips, she'd usually smell like sour milk.

That's when I started doing more than just looking at the pretty faces and figures the world seemed so full of. The first episode involved a blonde named Cindy. It was almost over when Betty found out about it. When I saw how hurt she was, I felt like a heel. I promised I'd never see Cindy again, and Betty agreed to give me a second chance.

I played it straight for a year, and then I met Cara. Even in a room full of sexy dames, Cara would stand out. I met her at a party Betty and I had gone to. Pretty as Betty was that night in her new dress and hairdo, she faded into the background with all the other women when Cara walked in. I stared just like all the other guys, but something about me must have been different. Cara steered her date straight toward me for an introduction, and we were together for the rest of the evening. I was being stupidly obvious and knew it, but I didn't care. The magnetism that radiated from Cara drove all caution from my mind.

Betty knew what was happening from the very first. Within three months she had filed for a divorce. I hadn't been home more than three nights a week during that time, and Betty didn't need to be told that I was spending those other nights with Cara. I hardly had any regrets at that time about the divorce. Cara with her hungry kisses was a raging fire in my blood. I couldn't think about anything else.

As soon as the divorce was final, I married Cara. I thought life with her would be a voluptuous paradise. I was only half right. Life with Cara was voluptuous, all right, but it wasn't paradise. It wasn't long before I realized that making love was the only thing Cara could do and the only thing she cared about. She couldn't cook or keep house, and she knew nothing about the other things that make a man feel content.

When I came home from the office bone-tired from juggling figures all day, Betty had never complained if I spent all evening lying around on the couch watching TV. Not Cara. She always wanted to go somewhere. And if the boss had been in one of his moods, Betty would listen to me while I let off the steam that had built up in me all day. When I got through, she'd usually kiss me behind the ear and call my boss a name so uncomplimentary I'd have to laugh. After that I'd feel relaxed and good.

But Cara wasn't like that at all. She wasn't interested in what happened to me during the day. She would only half listen for a few minutes and then, bored, she would put her arms around me and begin making love. She didn't know what affection was. There was only one kind of love as far as Cara was concerned.

Six months after I married Cara, the blinders dropped from my eyes. I knew that my life for the next twenty or thirty years would be nothing more than one long night in bed. It wasn't a comforting thought. I knew there was more to marriage than sex. With Betty I'd had everything that made up a good marriage, and now I realized what a treasure I had let slip through my fingers. I began using every excuse I could think of to go see Betty and Doug. Both Betty and Cara thought it was just Doug I wanted to be with. Today I planned to tell Betty the truth and beg her to take me back.

AS I parked in front of the house I'd once shared with Betty and Doug, a wave of nostalgia swept over me. I had known real happiness inside that yellow and white bungalow, and I'd been too big a fool to realize it. Somehow I just had to persuade Betty to give me another chance!

When Betty came to the door, she looked surprised. I usually didn't get there until after noon.

"I know I'm early," I said quickly, "but I've got a big day planned for Doug and me. For you, too, if you'll come with us. You used to love ball games, and I've got three tickets."

"Thanks, Dan, but I've got the house to clean and the laundry to do."

She worked five days a week as a secretary in a real estate and insurance office. The office was in a shopping center only a few blocks from the house. It made it nice for Betty to work so close to home. She could get to and from work in ten minutes. Doug left for school the same time she left for work, and there was only an hour between four and five when she had to pay a neighbor to look after Doug. She was getting along fine—too fine, in a way. There was really no reason why she should take me back. But maybe I could find a reason.

"Dad!" As I entered the house, Doug flung himself on me with an eagerness that warmed me like a dozen suns. "What are we going to do today?" We had the same blue eyes and straight brown hair with one faint wave in front.

I always planned something special for our days together. It was always the first thing on his mind.

"How about a ball game?" "Oh boy! A ball game!" He could hardly contain himself. Most seven-year-olds would rather go to a cartoon movie or an amusement park or something, but not Doug. He was a real baseball fan. I guess he got that from Betty and me. We used to see a game every time the budget would allow it when we were first married.

"Calm down," Betty told him. "You've got to eat dinner first. We're not having much," she said, turning to me doubtfully, "but you're welcome to share it."

"Don't bother to fix anything," I told her. "Doug and I will run down to the drive-in and bring something back. How does that sound, Doug?" "Goodly, we can get some French fries!"

A ball game and French fries made a perfect day for Doug. Betty and I exchanged a smile. That was another item in a long list to Betty's credit. She was friendly and pleasant whenever I came to visit Doug. If she harbored any bitterness toward me, she kept it well hidden for Doug's sake.

On the way to the drive-in I sounded Doug out on the subject of Life Without Father.

"I used to wish you would come home every night, like you did when you and Mommy were still married," he said. "But then I got to thinking that I was no worse off than Johnny and Craig. Both their dads are salesmen. They're gone all week and are only home on week ends, so I see you about as often as they see their dads. So it's okay."

A heaviness settled around my heart at the thought that he could accept the situation so easily. It would have been a lot easier to persuade Betty to give marriage with me another try if Doug had been unhappy about living in a fatherless home. It was becoming pretty obvious that Betty and Doug didn't need me half as much as I needed them.

But I wouldn't let myself get discouraged. I got Betty to agree to let me take her and Doug out to eat that night after Doug and I got back from the ball game. When I saw her, all cool and delicious looking in a pale

lavender dress, my mouth went dry. Now that she was a working girl again, she kept herself up the way she had before we were married. Her brown hair was short and neat and shiny, her mouth was outlined in pale pink lipstick. For a minute I loved her and wanted her so much I couldn't speak.

"You look terrific," I said finally. She smiled her thanks and took Doug's hand. "Shall we go?"

I TOOK them to a place that advertised itself as a family restaurant. They served plain food, well cooked, with half portions for kids. After we had eaten, I offered to take them to a movie, but Betty said no.

"I think Doug has had about all he can take today."

He looked tired, all right, and the fact that he didn't coax to go to the movie was proof enough that he was. In fact, he was almost asleep by the time we got back to the house.

"Will you turn me in tonight, Dad?" he murmured sleepily as I helped him out of the car.

"Sure thing, Skipper."

I waited until Betty had him in bed, and then I went in to say good night.

"It's been a swell day, Dad. Thanks." "I had fun, too. We'll do it again sometime."

"Night, Dad."

"Good night, son."

As I started out of the bedroom, Doug said shyly, "I'm not too big to be kissed good night if you want to."

I couldn't trust myself to speak, so I just kissed him and winked and turned out the light.

Betty was sitting in the living room smoking a cigarette when I came out of the bedroom. I lit one for myself to gain time to get my emotions under control again, but when I finally spoke, my voice was still hoarse.

"He's quite a boy, isn't he?"

Betty nodded. "He does real well, under the circumstances."

"Could we change those circumstances?"

She looked puzzled. "What do you mean?"

"Is there any chance that the three of us could be a family again?"

The hand holding the cigarette was on its way to her mouth, but now it dropped slowly. "You mean, marry you again?"

"Yes," I said, and I could hardly breathe.

She raised the cigarette to her mouth again, and this time she inhaled deeply. The smoke she exhaled had disappeared by the time she spoke again. My heart beat wildly as I waited. When she looked up at me, her usually honest and candid gray eyes were veiled. "What about Cara?" she asked.

I groaned. "The second biggest mistake of my life was marrying her. The biggest was destroying the marriage you and I had. I was the luckiest guy in the world when I had you and Doug. Now I'm the most miserable."

Behind those veiled eyes I saw something that made my heart leap. It was hope, and it burned so brightly that she couldn't hide it. I held my breath ex-

pectantly, and then I saw the hope fade. "You put me through torment twice, Dan. I'm not about to let you do it again."

"But I wouldn't! I swear to God I'd never hurt you again."

Her face fell into sad, bitter lines. "I've heard that before. What was her name? Cindy, wasn't it?"

I winced.

"And then came Cara," Betty continued. "You didn't even ask me to give you another chance when she came along. You had to have her, no matter what."

"Yeah, I know," I said heavily. "And I've known I was fifty different kinds of a fool ever since. I'm a changed man now, Betty. I wish you'd believe that."

"I wish I could." She put out her cigarette with slow, deliberate movements. There was a finality about the action that chased all remnants of hope from my heart. "But I stopped believing in you a long time ago, Dan. I'll never marry you again."

I left a few minutes later and drove home glumly. I was a guy who had thrown away happiness with both hands as though it were confetti. Now when I wanted it again, I found it had blown away on the wind. There was nothing to pick up. Nothing.

WHEN I got home, it was eight-thirty. The house was dark, so I knew Cara wasn't home. When I walked in, I noticed the smell for the first time. Every house has its own individual odor. I had never noticed before, but ours smelled like cigarette smoke and fingernail polish. Betty's smelled like a real home, of furniture polish and good things to eat.

I pulled off my clothes tiredly and went to bed. I didn't know where Cara was, and I didn't care. Nothing about our life together was important enough to care about.

I didn't sleep too well. I kept dreaming about being married to Betty again, and every time a dream would end, I'd wake up feeling like the devil.

It was four o'clock when Cara finally came home. There was a man with her. I could hear Cara's throaty laugh as they stood outside at the front door. She finally came in, and a car drove away. She came straight to the bedroom and flipped on the ceiling light. I pulled the blanket over my head and turned over.

"Oh, no, you don't!" she exclaimed and pulled the blanket down with a jerk. Standing there defiantly, she demanded, "Don't you want to know where I've been?"

I could smell the liquor now, and a glance at her told me she was pretty drunk. Her red hair was mussed and her lipstick smeared. "No," I said flatly.

Her eyes flashed dangerously. "I'll tell you, anyway. Nancy Emerson went to her mother's for the week end. I've been seeing to it that Bill didn't get lonely."

The Emersons ran around with our crowd some. Nancy was a nice girl, but Bill was a loudmouth and a woman-chaser. I didn't need any pictures drawn to know what he and Cara had been

doing. But the thing was, I didn't give a darn. I turned my back to Cara, but she was spoiling for a fight.

"Don't turn your back on me like I was a bug or something!" she yelled. "What do you expect me to do when you go see your precious Betty and Doug? Sit home and mope? You think I don't know what's going on between you and that mossy dame? She can't get another man, so she takes my leftovers!"

I whirled onto my back. "Shut up! Everything that passes through that mind of yours comes out sex, and I won't have you dirtying Betty with it."

Cara laughed harshly. "Pure as the driven snow, is she?" Then she called Betty an ugly name.

I jumped up like a shot and slapped her. She gasped and then flung herself at me. It was a real Domybrook. I finally had to lock myself in the spare bedroom to get away from her. When her temper breaks loose, she's as wild as a tiger.

I had planned on going back to Betty's the next day to spend all of Sunday with Doug and her, but by morning my battle scars appeared. One eye was swollen and black, and I had scratches all over my face and neck. I was ashamed to have Betty see me like that, so I waited. It was two weeks before the raw-meat look left my face. When I finally showed up on a Saturday morning again, I couldn't help noticing that Betty seemed glad to see me.

"I decided if you didn't come today," she said, "I was going to call you. Doug's been awfully worried."

A spark of hope came to life in me again as I saw the flush on her creamy cheeks. Could it be that she was worried about me, too? The spark was fanned into a full-sized flame by my next thought. Was it possible that she still loved me?

THAT idea went ricocheting around inside my skull as Doug came bounding in from the backyard and flung himself into my arms.

"I thought something had happened to you," he said, with relief in his young voice.

"I wasn't feeling too good. I didn't think I ought to come till I got over it."

"You feel okay now?" he asked anxiously.

I looked up and saw the flush still on Betty's face. "Super," I replied. "How about the three of us making a day of it at the beach?"

"The beach?" Doug squealed in delight. "Can we, Mom?"

Betty smiled. "I shouldn't. I've got loads of work to catch up on, but I could do it tomorrow, I guess."

I think her words made me as happy as they made Doug. As I helped him gather his suit and beach ball and stuff, I found myself remembering the veil that had dropped suddenly over Betty's eyes that night I had asked her to take me back. What had it hidden? If she still loved me, that could account for the veiled look and the flush on her face a few minutes ago as she'd greeted me. The hope in her eyes that night had been unmistakable. It had faded quick-

ly, but maybe it had come to life again these past two weeks while she'd had time to think about things. Maybe I had a chance, after all.

We had a great day at the beach. It was crowded, but we managed to find a few square yards of sand for ourselves. The water was cool, the sun and sand hot. Doug kept me busy playing with him, but I stole a look at Betty whenever I could. She lay on her back in the sand, one leg raised slightly. Her orange suit was made of some clinging knit stuff. It would have made Cara look like a tub, but on Betty's leaner curves it looked like a million dollars. I wondered how I ever could have thought she was too thin.

Her eyes were hidden behind dark glasses that were almost black, so I couldn't tell whether she was watching me or not. I hoped she was.

We stopped on the way home that night and had something to eat. Betty said it was bedtime for Doug when we got to the house, and he didn't argue. We both tucked him in this time. My hand touched hers as we were covering him. I caught it, and our eyes met for a moment above our sleepy son. Then Betty withdrew her hand slowly, and I followed her out of the bedroom.

"Could you drink a cup of coffee before you start home?" Betty asked.

"I sure could. I'm bushed. It's not easy keeping up with a seven-year-old."

She laughed. "I know."

I went into the kitchen with her and watched her make the coffee. The orange bathing suit had been exchanged for white shorts and a white blouse. She didn't look more than eighteen, a very pretty, desirable eighteen. I thought of the day when I had belonged in this kitchen, at this table. I wondered if Betty were thinking the same thing as she made coffee for me and if she wanted it that way again as much as I did.

"Shall we drink it in here or in the living room?" she asked as she filled our cups.

"Let's go in the living room and light just one lamp. It's too light in here. I've had all the glare I can stand for one day."

I made my coffee hot as long as I could and then said good night reluctantly.

"It's been a lovely day, Dan," Betty said at the door. "Thanks."

"It was my pleasure."

HER eyes were shining softly in the dim light. She was very near, and I put out my arms hungrily toward her. She didn't jerk away, and when my mouth found hers, any doubt about her still loving me fled. Her lips were warm and trembling under mine. I murmured her name and knew the sweet joy of triumph. Then I kissed her again with mounting urgency. She stiffened almost at once and tried to push me away. My hands had found their way to the neck of her blouse when she managed to pull free.

"Oh!" she cried, and shuddered with disgust and anger. "And I thought maybe you really had changed!"

I stared at her, bewildered, with the



blood still pounding in my head. "You wanted me to kiss you. You even liked it," I protested.

"And you still think every woman that lets you kiss her wants you to make love to her!" She shook her head and made a sound that was half laugh, half sob. "I was crazy to let myself hope again."

"No, you weren't," I insisted desperately. "We can make a go of it again. You want to try, you know you do."

"Maybe I did—for a little while. But you fixed that. Get out, Dan. From now on your visits will be strictly with Doug. Don't try to include me. It won't do you any good."

I left as she asked me to do, but she hadn't succeeded in discouraging me. I was convinced that she still wanted me as much as I wanted her. Breaking down her resistance was only a matter of time. But I'd have to change my tactics. I couldn't work on her directly. That would put her back up and ruin everything. But I thought I knew a way that would beat down her defenses. I was sure that if she thought she ought to take me back on Doug's account, she would. I didn't think I'd have any trouble there.

I went right to work on Doug the next day. I took him to another ball game, and on the way, I said, "You want to know a secret?"

"Sure," he said eagerly.

"I think your mother would marry me again if she thought you wanted it more than anything else in the world."

Hope struggled with doubt in his face. "Honest?"

I nodded. "I'm sure of it. Would you like it if we could be together like this every day instead of just on Saturday or Sunday?"

"Yeah, but I guess this is okay."

"You mean you're completely happy with things the way they are?"

"Well, no, but—well, they're okay, I guess."

I saw his lips tremble slightly, and I suddenly understood something. The divorce must have cut him up pretty badly. But he had adjusted to it, by who knows how much painful struggle. Now he was so afraid of being hurt again that he wouldn't let himself think about the possibility of Betty and me getting together once more.

"You'd like it, though, if the three of us could live together again, wouldn't you?"

"I suppose so."

"Why don't you tell your mother so? I'm sure that's all it would take. If she thought you wanted her to, she'd marry me in a minute."

"Do you really think so?" Hope was struggling into his face again.

"I'm as sure of it as I am that the Yankees will win the pennant again this year."

That clinched it for Doug. "I'll ask her to marry you tonight!" he exclaimed excitedly.

"Whoa! Not so fast. We don't want her to know what we're up to. She might get mad if she thought we were trying to make up her mind for her." I winked at him. "You know how women are."

"They are kinda funny sometimes," he agreed solemnly.

"They sure are. That's why it wouldn't be a good idea to just up and tell her you think she ought to marry me again."

"How will I do it then?"

"Go at it kind of slow and easy. Tell her how much fun you and I have together and how you wish you could see me oftener. Tell her you wish I lived with you so we could go out into the yard nights after supper and play ball. Let her know you get lonesome for me in the middle of the week. Things like that."

Doug nodded eagerly. "That won't be hard to do."

"You want to do it then?"

"Gosh, I'd do anything to get you and Mom back together, Dad."

I put my arm around him and slid him closer to me on the car seat. He

## BRIDE'S HOUSE

The curtains match the sunlight's glow,

In warm and cheerful hue.

The windows all are open

wide

To let the breezes through.

The rugs are on the gleaming

floors,

Each nook is neat and clean.

To me, our home's the sweet-

est spot

My eyes have ever seen.

And as I carefully place each

cup

And polish every spoon,

I'm awfully glad, my dear,

you made

A bride of me this June!

—Pauline Booker

struggled under my arm contentedly. "It won't take long, son. Just wait and see."

I DIDN'T hang around Betty's house after I got Doug home. She was pretty reserved and just friendly enough toward me to avoid upsetting him. I told him I'd see him as soon as I could manage it.

It was nearly six when I got home, and Cara was just leaving. She was all gussied up in a white beaded dress and shoes to match. It was the kind of dress women call a sheath, and I guess it was supposed to fit tight, but I think Cara had overdone it. I wondered if she could sit down in the thing or whether she'd have to spend the rest of the night standing up.

"What are you doing home so early?" she asked sarcastically.

"It's six o'clock. What's so early about that?"

"All I know is, you usually aren't home when I leave. Did you get bored playing kids' games?"

"No," I said curtly. I hated her for the contempt with which she always spoke about Doug and Betty.

The spiteful lines relaxed around her heavily lipstick mouth, and there was a whirling note in her voice as she said, "How about going out with me tonight? I'm getting tired of going out by myself on Sunday nights."

I laughed shortly. "Who are you kidding? You may be alone when you walk into a bar, but inside of five minutes you've got a guy hanging from each shoulder."

She came close to me and ran a hand caressingly from my ear to my throat. "That's only because you aren't around. If you were with me, I wouldn't have an eye for other guys."

I looked at her, red hair piled high on her head, sultry-eyed, her ripe curves straining against her dress. Every detail, every thought that ran through her head was aimed in one direction—sex. I wondered for the hundredth time why I'd married a dame as one-sided as a mirror. The vision of Betty rose up before me—sweet and decent Betty, to whom love meant not only body but soul. "I'm not flattered," I told her. "Any male appeals to you as much as I do. Go offer your wares to someone else."

Her fingernails jabbed into my neck. But almost in the same instant I grabbed her arm, twisting it behind her, and shoved her out the front door. She was screaming, calling me every name under the sun as I locked the door. When she realized she couldn't get at me, she jumped into the car and took off. I didn't know whether she'd be back or not and didn't care. I was sick of her. Maybe it was my fault as much as hers. I hadn't had to marry her. But I had been a fool, and I was smart enough to know it now. The quicker I could get her out of my life, the happier I'd be.

She didn't show up until the next night. I had it out with her then and told her I wanted a divorce. She said she was way ahead of me. She was going right down to see a lawyer the next morning, and she'd squeeze every cent of alimony out of me that she could. I was ready for that one, too. I told her in that case I'd file my own request for a divorce, charging her with adultery. I could get plenty of proof, and she knew it. I left her in a frustrated rage and checked into a hotel.

I started seeing Doug four or five times a week. I began to suspect that our little campaign was having an effect on Betty. She seemed troubled, and faint lines of strain began to show in her face. I was sure she was weighing her own doubts about remarriage to me against Doug's obvious desire to have me as a member of the family once more.

THEN one night several weeks later, Betty called me at my hotel room. Doug was sick, and she wanted me to come over right away. Her voice sounded funny. I put it down to worry and went right over. When I got there, I saw that worry wasn't the only thing wrong with her. She was madder than I ever seen her, not wildly furious the way Cara got, but in an icy, trembling rage.

"It's all your doing," she began the

moment I stepped inside the house. Her face was white and still, but her eyes were blazing.

"What do you mean?" The hate in her voice hit me with the force of a blow.

"You and your little scheme! Using Doug to get me back!"

Doug must have told her, I thought. But what did that have to do with his being sick? "What's wrong with that? Doug wants us back together as much as I want it."

"Sure he does. You think I don't know how hard our divorce was on him? It tore him to pieces at first, but after a while he adjusted to it, and you don't know how relieved I was." She glared at me as I stood facing her helplessly there in the middle of the living room. "Then you had to go and ruin everything. I knew you were capable of a lot of things, but I didn't know you could be that cruel."

Alarm shot through me. "What's wrong with Doug? What's it got to do with me?"

A muscle began to twitch in her cheek. The effect was chilling. Her carefully controlled anger was ten times more frightening than Cara's free-swinging tantrums. "The last few weeks Doug has reminded me in a hundred ways of how much he misses by not having a father around all the time. It set me to doing a lot of thinking. I began to wonder if I shouldn't give marriage with you another try after all. But finally I knew it wouldn't work. It was useless giving it another try when I knew you hadn't changed." She laughed bitterly. "You had proven that only too well that night we came home from the beach."

"That was a mistake. I have changed. What can I do to prove it to you?" I asked desperately.

"Nothing now. You've proven the opposite beyond all doubt. You built up Doug's hopes for your own selfish ends, and when I explained to him last night that there was no chance of our ever going back together, it was too much for him. He was hysterical. I had to call a doctor. Today he's just lain in his bed, sick and silent. He acts like he wants to die."

I stared at her for an instant, then brushed past her and rushed to Doug's room. I stopped just inside the door, staggered by the change in him. Last time I had seen him, he was tanned and healthy and bubbling over with the sheer joy of living. Now he lay still as death, pale and sunken-eyed. He didn't even speak when he saw me.

"Hi, Skipper," I said thickly. "What'd the Yanks do today?"

He turned his eyes to the wall and didn't answer.

A COLD knot formed in my stomach. I had done this to him, broken his heart so that he lay there like a broken doll. Blindly, I pulled a chair up beside his bed and sat down. How could I undo what I had done? I took one of his hands, and it lay limply in mine.

"I've done a terrible thing, son. If I were still your age, I'd get the spank-

ing of my life, and I'd deserve every lick. I didn't want to cause you any unhappiness. I didn't think I would. I really thought Mom would marry me again if you showed that you wanted her to. But, you see, I hurt her so many times—just like you're hurt now—that she was afraid to marry me again. She knew she couldn't stand being hurt another time. We can't blame her for that, can we?"

He didn't move, didn't answer. I wasn't even sure that he was hearing me.

"Can we, Doug?" I repeated. "I guess not." His voice was a mere whisper.

"That's right," I said, relieved that he had at least spoken. "Blame me, not her. I should have been satisfied with things the way they were, like you and Mom were. I shouldn't have stirred up trouble, wanting things that could never be."

I looked at the hand inside mine, so small, so awfully small. I knew there was no way that I could make his crushing disappointment any easier to bear.

"You and I will just have to get used to the idea of living apart, seeing each other whenever we can, like we've been doing. It hasn't been so bad that way, has it?"

"No, but—" He choked then and began sobbing tiredly and with a hopelessness that made my chest ache.

I caught him up in my arms and pressed his small body to me. "Don't cry, son. We're men, aren't we? You know what Mickey Mantle does when things aren't going good with him? He just digs in and keeps swinging until finally things start looking better for him. You can do that, can't you?"

"I'll try," Doug said in a muffled and broken voice.

"That's a boy." I patted him and laid him back on the bed. "Now, you get a good night's sleep, and things will look a lot better tomorrow. Okay?"

"Okay, Dad," he replied listlessly.

I pulled his bedroom door shut behind me and sank into the nearest living room chair, my face in my hands. Betty was pacing up and down. It was a long time before I could speak.

Finally I looked up and said shakily, "I'm sorry, Betty. I wish I could tell you how sorry. Not that that does you and Doug any good."

"No, it doesn't," she said bitterly. "I'd like to take you to court and ask that you be limited to one visit a week or less, but for now I think Doug needs to see you oftener than that. I can wear him away from you in time, so you'll never get the chance to mess up his life again."

"I guess I couldn't blame you for that, but don't worry. I'll do all I can to get Doug back where he was before I blew everything to bits."

Betty's control broke, and her shoulders began shaking. "My poor baby! Why does he have to go all through this again?"

I didn't touch her or try to comfort her. I knew my touch would have been like poison. "I'll call tomorrow and see how he is," I said and left quietly.

I was certainly a different man going out of that house than I was going in. And the change kept working and getting deeper as the days passed, too. I saw myself as I really was that night when I sat beside Doug and saw what I had done to him. I could see there was nothing to me but selfishness and never had been. I was as one-sided as Cara, only my one-sidedness was self, not sex. I had always been concerned with what I wanted. I'd never had a thought about what it might do to someone else.

When I thought of the cost to Betty and Doug of my always wanting something for myself, my skin crawled. I'd have changed places with anybody in the world then, because I couldn't stand being Dan Newton. There was only one way for me to know any peace. That was to do everything I could to help Betty and Doug and hope I could somehow add a small measure of happiness to their lives.

I was free now to do this. Cara was out of my life completely. I had been informed by her lawyer that the divorce was being filed and in six months that sham marriage would gasp its last.

The change in me must have shown, because Betty never did restrict me to one visit a week like she'd said she wanted to. I went often at first, because we both agreed Doug needed me around. I kept him as busy as I could, plenty of ball games and visits to the amusement park and fishing. Anything I could think of that would cheer him up. It worked, and in time it seemed he had forgotten his terrible disappointment. I just kept coming, though, and Betty didn't say anything. I could see she wasn't bitter or angry with me any more.

"If I didn't know you so well, I'd think you'd really changed," she said one day as I was leaving. Doug had gone to the kitchen for a glass of milk.

"I don't blame you for doubting, but I have," I said soberly.

She didn't say any more. She just looked at me, her expression puzzled and unbelieving.

One night she called up about seventy-three. "Dan, I've got an awfully big favor to ask."

"Go ahead. Ask it." I welcomed the chance to do something for her.

"I told Nat I'd go to a party with him tonight, and the sitter just called and said some family matter has come up and she can't make it. I've tried to get another sitter and can't, and I've tried to get hold of Nat to break our date. But he must be already on his way to pick me up, because he doesn't answer." She had been talking swiftly, and now she paused for breath.

"You want me to come over and stay with Doug?" I asked.

"Would you?"

"That's my idea of a great evening," I assured her.

"Thanks, Dan," she said gratefully.

"I'll be right over."

Betty had been dating ever since our divorce, but she never seemed to get serious about anyone. But the last two months—ever since Doug had gotten back to normal—she'd been seeing a lot

of a guy named Nat Baxter. I met him the first time when he picked Betty up that night. He was plenty good looking, with dark hair and eyes, but he seemed pretty stuffy. For a minute I found myself hoping Betty wasn't getting too serious about him. Then I got rid of that thought. If he could make Betty happy, that's all that counted.

I had given up trying to win Betty back. It was hopeless, and I knew it now. I was satisfied just to see Doug and her whenever I could. If she re-married, it would change things, but I couldn't expect an attractive girl like her to stay unmarried the rest of her life.

I got Doug to bed at eight-thirty. The fall school term had started, and he had to get to bed earlier than during the summer. I watched TV awhile and then fell asleep on the couch.

**FOOTSTEPS** on the porch woke me. I sat up, yawned, and looked at my watch. It was one minute to midnight. It seemed kind of early for a party to be over. Then the door opened, and I saw something I had never seen before. There stood Betty, leaning against a disgusted-looking Nat Baxter, and she was swacked. And I mean swacked! Betty, who somehow always managed to make one drink last through a whole party! Her mouth sort of slid off to one side in a foolish smile, and she was keeping her neck stiff as if she were afraid that if she relaxed it for a minute, her head would fall.

I was up like a shot and got her away from Baxter and into a chair. "I ought to punch you right in the nose!" I told him angrily.

"Listen, I had nothing to do with this," he replied, eyeing Betty with distaste. "I've been dating her, believing she was a decent young woman. Now I see she's just like all the rest of these—"

I didn't let him finish. I had him for size, so I practically tossed him through the door. Then I hurried back to Betty. "Did he try to make love to you? Because if he did, I'll kill him!"

"Nat try to make love to me?" It struck her so funny that she forgot to keep her neck stiff, and her head fell to one side. "Oh, Dan, you would think of that."

I took a deep breath. "What did happen? This isn't like you."

The crooked smile disappeared, and she put one hand over her eyes. "Things have been building, building up inside me." Her voice was thick and stumbling.

"What things?"  
"—It doesn't matter," she said wearily, and her hand dropped away from her eyes as if she were too tired to hold it there.

"I'll help you to bed. You'll feel better after a good night's sleep." I swung her up into my arms and carried her to her bedroom. It brought back a rush of memories that I tried to stifle. When I put her down on her bed, she clung to me and murmured, "Dan, Dan." And then she was kissing me. For a few moments, as her body became alive in

my arms, all reason fled my mind. Then I stood up quickly, fighting the wild desire that swept through me.

"Don't go away, Dan, please," she begged, holding out her arms again.

"Now, Betty, you don't really want this," I said, trying to speak calmly. "You've just had a few too many drinks."

She shook her head. "I want you." Her voice caught. "Oh, Dan, how I want you!"

I clenched my fists and swallowed. It would be so easy to give in to her pleas and to my own desire. I wanted her, too, so much that sometimes I felt sick from it. But I wasn't going to take advantage of her like that. I didn't know what was torturing her, but I did know that when she woke up in the morning sober and realized that she had gotten me to make love to her, she would hate herself. I wouldn't do anything to add to her misery.

"Here, let's get your shoes off. And your dress," I said, undressing her as if she were as young as Doug, and all the time she was crying and begging, "Please, Dan, please."

I tried to keep my eyes off that slender body that I remembered so well. I was sweating and my breath was coming in ragged gasps by the time I got out of there. I lit a cigarette and smoked it so fast my lungs burned like fire. By the time I had finished a second one, I had myself under control. The sound of Betty's soft sobbing had stopped by then, and I knew she was asleep. I decided I'd better stay the night. If

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Doug woke up, Betty would never hear him. It was nearly four a.m. before I fell asleep on the couch.

**T**HE next morning I got Doug up and fed and off to school before Betty woke up. I told Doug that Betty was sick.

"Is she real sick, Dad?" he asked, worried.

"No, it's just a flu bug or something. She'll be as good as well by tomorrow."

After he left, I called Betty's boss and told him the same thing. Then I made a pot of strong coffee. I was in the kitchen drinking a cup when I heard her get up and turn on the shower. After a while she came to the kitchen as white as the terry cloth robe she wore. She stood there in the doorway a minute, her hands deep in the pockets of her robe. Then she said, "What must you think of me?"

I grinned and poured her a cup of coffee. "I think you're a very nice girl with a poor head for liquor. You'd do

better sticking to this," I said, handing her the cup and pulling up a chair for her.

She took a sip cautiously. "I'm so ashamed."

"Forget it. I understand."

She glanced up at me. "Do you?" She continued staring at me, and finally she asked, "Why didn't you make love to me, Dan?"

I shrugged and looked down at my cup so she couldn't see how shook I was, just remembering. "I'll have to admit I was tempted. But I knew how you'd feel this morning. I couldn't do that to you."

"You mean you knew I'd hate myself and you didn't want to be responsible for that?"

"You seem to have some sort of trouble. I didn't want to add to it."

"Oh, Dan, do you know what my trouble is?" she cried softly.

Something in her voice made me look up. She was leaning toward me. Color had come back into her face.

"You've been different these last months, Dan. So much nicer. I kept telling myself not to hope, that I'd only get hurt again, but all the time I've been loving you and wanting you, and it's been tearing me apart."

I couldn't say anything. I couldn't believe my ears.

"But you have changed! Last night proves it. Once you'd have made love to me without a thought for the consequences. Oh, darling, now I can love you and not tear myself to pieces over it!"

Tears began to run down her cheeks, and I gathered her up into my arms with a hoarse cry.

"Do you mean it, Betty?"

"Yes, Dan! Oh, yes!"

I held onto her as tightly as I could. Two months ago I had written myself off as a guy who had had his chances and missed them. Now I was being given a new slate. I knew I'd be mighty careful what I wrote on this one.

• THE END

## Share a Husband with Other Women

(Continued from page 15)

white robes in heaven and reap the added glory that my early religion promised me.

My childhood friends and relatives have disowned me. If I were to meet my mother and father on the street, they would ignore me as a stranger. My father's last words burned deep into my conscience. He was angry when he spoke. "Before God, you are a blackened sinner, Ruth," he said angrily. "Even if you are my own flesh and blood, I hope I will never have to look upon your face again."

In his eyes I am an outcast. I have violated the beliefs of his God and our church. My family thinks I have disgraced them and all the others in our little town. Even Abby, my sister and playmate, has turned against me.

It was the summer I was twelve years old that something happened that was going to hurl me into a completely new and strange world.

Like any normal child, I was happy playing with the other children in our little settlement in northwest Arizona. We went to a school taught by one of the staunch supporters of our church. Her name was Rebecca Robins. She was stern, and we feared to disobey her.

We learned to read, write, and do arithmetic. We girls were given separate, special attention and taught that our female body was our greatest glory. We were told that God had been extremely good in giving us the kind of body that would give birth to other human beings—many of them. We were assured that only if we followed these teachings would we be permitted the supreme glory of wearing pure white robes in heaven. It was all very beautiful and wonderful, the way Rebecca told it to us.

My father was stern. In fact, all the grownups seemed to be that way. As we children grew up, we became more sober and serious. Only the smaller

ones seemed to be able to indulge in laughter without effort. But this seriousness was as much our life as the rising and the setting of the sun in our beautiful mountain homeland. We accepted it. We were shut off from the world. We had nothing with which to compare what we were taught.

The trouble started in the evening late in the summer I was twelve years old. I remember it vividly. There seemed to be a kind of suppressed excitement among the grownups. All the men and boys in the village, who had been working in the fields, suddenly came in. They collected in small groups, whispering and looking fearfully down the only road that came into our town.

It was barely dark when Abby, my sister, and I were sent to bed. I could tell by the way Father acted that he was disturbed about something. There was none of the tenderness in his voice as he spoke to us.

"You girls get to bed, and I don't want a sound out of you," he said curtly. Then he closed the bedroom door firmly.

In a worried whisper I asked my sister why we had been put to bed so early. Abby was bursting with excitement. "I heard Mother and Sylvia talking," she confided. "Sylvia heard some of the men say that Jasper Aikens rode in on horseback over the mountain trail. He told Father that officers of the law were coming tonight when we were all asleep."

That sent a chill down my spine. Officers of the law always meant trouble. They had come once before. I could remember it so clearly. They'd asked many questions. I remember one of them talking to my father. "Which one of these women is your wife?" he'd asked grimly.

"You have no right to come in my house this way," my father retorted evenly, standing in the doorway. "I know the law. You have to have a

search warrant to come in here. You don't have one."

"You know the law, do you?" the officer said with a sneer. "Then you must know that the law allows each man only one wife. Which one of these women is your wife?"

"Anne here is my wife," my father said calmly, pointing to my mother.

"Then who is this?" he asked pointing to Fanny, who had just come in.

It was Mother who spoke up. "Fanny is my sister," she said through tightly compressed lips. "She is visiting here with us."

"Well, how about this one?" the officer said, indicating Sylvia. Sylvia was standing by the stove, her face white.

"She is boarding here until spring," Father said, his eyes blazing with outrage that outsiders would come into his house and inquire about things that he considered none of their business.

**B**UT I knew that Father had not told the truth. Fanny was not my mother's sister and Sylvia was not my visiting—she lived with us. Both Fanny and Sylvia were Father's younger wives in celestial marriage. You see, we were members of the Fundamentalist Mormon Church, which teaches that it is God's will that men have more than one wife so that more souls will be brought into the world. But because of the officers, Father had to conceal this fact.

The officers left, and our home returned to normal. But I heard Father talking to Mother. "They'll be back," he said grimly. "They're not done. They'll never cease to persecute us. But we'll be ready for them when they come next time. We'll prepare for them."

The very next day Father and some of the other men in the settlement started building some cabins. Father moved Fanny and Sylvia over into them.

A long time passed. It began to look like Father had been wrong. The officers from outside did not come back.

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so we settled down and everything was quiet and peaceful in our little village, which we called Vermillion.

I was too young to understand everything fully, but we were bursting with pride and happiness when Sylvia gave birth to a darling baby girl. It was just a short time after that that the whole town again looked upon Father with envy when Fanny had her baby and it also was a girl.

I heard Elder Boskins talking to Father. "God smiles his approval upon you, Jacob," he said reverently. "Our church needs girls to help us liberate the souls that are waiting to be born. You have done well."

Father was proud but humble. "It is the will of God, Elder Boskins," he said quietly. "I dedicate myself to the will of God."

"May God bless you further, Jacob," he said approvingly.

Elder Boskins was respected. He was the minister in our church. We had been told from as far back as we could remember that our elder, the one who preached to us on Sundays, was someone very special—our revelator—a representative of God here on earth. So you will understand our pride when Elder Boskins spoke with such glowing words to our father.

All this flashed through my mind as I listened to Abby and her frightening news that on this very night the officers of the law might come again to our town, bent on persecuting us and disturbing our way of life.

"What will they do?" I asked breathlessly. Abby was two years older than I, and of course I looked up to her as being more worldly-wise and better informed.

But before Abby could answer, our bedroom door opened and there stood Father with a kerosene lamp in his hand. He came in and closed the door. Abby and I both waited. We never spoke to Father first. We always waited for him to speak what was on his mind.

"I want you girls to listen carefully," he said in a strained voice. "There will be men here tonight—policemen. They mean us no good. They are a part of the devil's plan to persecute us. We will show them that our faith is stronger than their or their guns or their prisons. You girls can help."

He looked at us. His handsome face was set in grim lines, his wayward hair hung almost to his shoulders. He was every inch a man, and we were proud of Father.

"They will try to question you girls," he continued, "so remember—and he looked at us with blazing eyes—"remember, neither of you is to open your mouth to answer their questions. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Father," Abby spoke up quickly.

"Yes—yes, Father," I stammered, not quite understanding why.

Without another word Father turned and closed the door, leaving us breathless in the darkened room. His words burned deeply into my soul. I shall never forget them. We lay huddled together on the bed, trying to draw strength and courage from the presence

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of the other. I felt the more dependent and I think the more frightened.

"Why do they do this to us, Abby?" I cried in an agonized whisper. "Why can't they leave us alone?"

I knew Abby was frightened, too, because I could feel her tremble, but I was proud of her because she always knew what to do, and I always came to her with my problems.

"They can't stand to see us live here peaceful and happy," Abby said a little nervously. "They want to force their way of life on us. But we'll do just as Father says. They can't make us tell."

"Tell?" I cried. "What will they want us to tell?"

"They want to take away from us women our chance to wear the white robes in heaven," Abby said through clenched teeth. "They want to break up our beliefs in God. If they find out Father has taken Fanny and Sylvia for wives, as well as our mother, they'll put him in prison. That's what they want to do and—"

ABBY stopped short in the middle of what she was saying. The shrill barking of our dog was followed by the sound of an approaching automobile. The headlights played ghostlike on the walls of our room as it rounded the curve by our house.

Abby sprang from bed in her nightgown and peered out from behind the curtains. "Oh, there are a lot of cars, and they are loaded with men—officers!" she cried. She came back to bed, and we lay there close to each other, waiting for what might come.

I heard Father open the door.

"You are Jacob Wollcott, are you not?" I heard a voice say.

"Yes, I am Jacob Wollcott," Father said firmly.

"I have a warrant here to search your house," the voice said.

"I am a law-abiding man," I heard Father say. "But I warn you, you are trespassing in the household of a man who believes in the teachings of God."

Abby and I lay still hardly daring to breathe. Then she whispered, "Now remember, Ruth, they can't make us talk, and we will tell them nothing." In Abby's voice there was a firm note of resolution, and I felt my own determination mount.

Presently we heard footsteps across the kitchen, and then our door flew open. We saw the figure of a man in the uniform of the state police of Arizona. He came into our room, carrying a huge flashlight in his hand. He turned to Father, who was just behind him. "I suppose these are your children, Wollcott?" he said, and Father nodded his head. "What are their names?"

The man came over close to our bed, and Father followed. "Their names are Ruth and Abby," Father said, then continued, "Ruth on the far side is twelve years old, Abby is—"

The officer cut in, "Never mind," he said gruffly. "I'll do all the talking from now on."

He looked sternly at Abby. "Abby, my girl, who lives in this little cabin

beside your house? You must tell me."

I was glad of the bedcovers because I was trembling so. That was where Sylvia lived. Abby was right. They were going to question us about Sylvia and Fanny. I looked at Abby. Her eyes stared straight at the officer, but her lips were tight. She stared, but she said nothing.

"I said," he repeated, more gruffly this time, "who is it lives in this cabin next to yours?"

A defiant look spread over Abby's face. Her lips tightened, but not a sound escaped her lips. By the light Father held, I could see the officer's face turn an angry pink, and the cords stood out on his neck.

Then his gaze shifted to me. "All right, you," he said. "Who lives in those two houses next to yours?"

I felt my heart was up in my throat. Then I felt Abby's hand steal over mine under the covers. She squeezed it encouragingly. I felt better. I looked straight into his eyes, but my lips were sealed.

It was the officer who first spoke. He turned to Father. "Well, Wollcott," he said grimly, "you got them trained pretty well. It's the same old thing. You've got a settlement of silent women here. Even the little ones that you're about ready to marry off—you've got them clammed up as tight as the old ones. But it won't do you any good this time. I'm afraid we've got the goods on you."

Father glared at him, and they both left our room. Abby and I breathed a sigh of relief, then we both heard the voice of the officer in the kitchen.

"Wollcott," I heard him say, "fortunately we don't need to depend on your children to tell us. We've had a secret investigator in your village for over a year. You didn't know you were being watched. You've broken the law by having too many wives. You've already had a child by a woman who calls herself Sylvia Adams. You've had another child by Fanny Franklin. You've taken both as wives by your celestial marriage deal. Besides that, you have the first wife that you admit having."

Abby and I listened breathlessly. My father said not a word. There was a brief silence, then the officer's voice went on. "These other two wives used to live with you in this house until the last raid. Then you got busy and built the cabins for them to make it look like they lived alone. But in court we'll prove you take turns spending your nights with your three wives. I'd say you polygs have just about had it. It will be a long time before you spend the night with any of your wives again."

FATHER had to go with the officers that night. They put him in jail at Webster, a town over the mountains from our settlement.

The police made all of the women suspected of being wives come to the court trials with their children. Mother took Abby and me. Sylvia and Fanny took their babies.

The courtroom was crowded, and people stared at us. I felt terrible at being made to feel that we had done

something disgraceful. Abby was defiant, but I couldn't help feeling the pain of every leer and every self-righteous smile in the audience.

Father was convicted. "Jacob Wollcott," the judge said sternly, "before I pronounce sentence, do you have anything to say for yourself?"

Father stood up. "Men and women have suffered religious persecution since the beginning of time," he said evenly.

"We have done no wrong. We are following God's word and worshiping according to the dictates of our conscience. The nation's constitution gives us all the right of religious worship. We have done only that. You have it in your power to send me to prison. You can take my family away from me. But you can never change God's word. You can never break the spirit of our people."

The courtroom hung breathlessly on every word. I felt a surge of pride in my handsome father and the fearless way he faced the people that day. Abby's expression was one of exalted joy.

The judge swallowed hard and then cleared his throat and spoke in a booming voice. "Jacob Wollcott, you have been convicted of breaking the law by indulging in the practice of plural marriage. I sentence you to five years in the state prison at hard labor." He banged his gavel, and it was over.

One by one the other men who were accused were sentenced, and the officers led them away. The women never allowed the expression on their faces to change. What they felt in their hearts was concealed by a stoic mask as they filed out of the courtroom.

But our troubles were not over. Each family was shown separately into the private chamber of the judge. Sylvia and Fanny with their babies sat beside Mother and Abby and me when our turn came.

The judge looked over his spectacles. "I'm prepared to offer you mothers a chance to mend your ways and live out a life of respectability," he began kindly. "If each of you will sign this paper, you will be released by this court and allowed to go back to your homes. The paper you sign will be a promise that you renounce plural marriage and will not return to that way of life."

When Mother understood the full meaning of the judge's words, her face turned white. I glanced at Sylvia and Fanny. They, too, looked a sickly white.

I could grasp a part of the importance of what was wanted. I knew that to sign the paper the judge had before him would force Fanny and Sylvia to give up all claim on Father and renounce their religious belief. I remember thinking how brutally cruel that would be to them. How could the law do such a thing to us? Then I grew suddenly resentful of the man who was offering them this way out. I hated him for what he was trying to do to us.

"Which of you will sign first?" the judge asked.

I saw Mother slowly shake her head. Sylvia and Fanny followed by the same sign. The judge looked surprised.

"Come now," he said, "the first woman to marry Jacob Wollcott is his real wife. Legally, you other two have no husband."

No one spoke as the big clock on the wall ticked loudly.

Finally Mother spoke. "I'm sure we feel alike," she said with determination in her voice. "We cannot sign such a thing. It is cruel and against our conscience."

The judge's mouth dropped open in amazement. "Is that the way you feel, too?" he said, looking at Fanny and Sylvia.

"Yes," they both said quickly, almost at once.

The judge swallowed hard. It was plain that he was dumfounded at the resolution and courage of the women before him. He hesitated. Then he tapped the desk before him with a pencil. When he looked up again, his face was grim.

"In that case, I'm afraid this court will be forced to take action until such time as you decide to comply," he said. Then after a pause he added, "Do you understand that if you do not sign this affidavit, the court will declare your children illegitimate, and then I am empowered to place them in suitable homes where they may grow up to become good, law-abiding citizens."

Mother cleared her throat. "We know you can do this," she said in an even voice, "but you will have to answer to God for your act, and may God have mercy on your soul. You cannot change the dictates of the conscience of God-fearing people. You cannot break the deep ties that bind us to our husband. God has given us—all of us—children. They are the bonds that hold us tight. They are God's manifest approval of our way of life. We are sealed to our husband in this life and through all eternity. All you can hope to do is cause us more heartache and suffering by taking our children from us. But not even by that can you force us against the word of God as we understand it. You can do nothing but take our children from us."

For a full minute the judge stared at Mother. Very erect, she returned his stare. Not in one small part did she show that she was prepared to give in. Sylvia and Fanny were much younger and less sure of themselves. They might have broken down and given in, but with Mother as an example they, too, looked their defiance at the man before them. The three of them presented a solid front of determination.

THAT same day Abby and I were torn from our mother and taken to the children's shelter. The judge ruled that children five years and under would be left with their mothers so Sylvia and Fanny were allowed to keep their babies and go back to our town, Vermillion, under the jurisdiction of the court.

I thought I would die of loneliness and homesickness. But Abby set her jaw with fierce determination and never shed a tear. My pillow was damp with tears every night as we waited for the law to do with us as they had decided.



## Let's talk frankly about internal cleanliness

Day before yesterday, many women hesitated to talk about the douche even to their best friends, let alone to a doctor or druggist.

Today, thank goodness, women are beginning to discuss these things freely and openly. But—even now—many women don't realize what is involved in treating "the delicate zone."

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Abby seemed to grow adult overnight. "All they can do," she said grimly, "is to make us suffer and be miserable. Mother is right. What God has done can't be changed. I love Mother and Father, and someday I'll make them both proud of me."

"But what can we do, Abby?" I sobbed.

"Just remember how brave Father was," she snapped, "and think how miserable Mother is all alone. They should give you courage to stand anything they can do to us."

Then in spite of her determination, Abby broke down, and we both sobbed ourselves to sleep. And that was the last night I spent with Abby for four long years.

The next day I got on a bus with a welfare worker, and we traveled for almost half a day. She was kind to me. She bought some candy and popcorn at the station that we passed. I tried to eat it because it tasted good. In Vermillion we didn't have such things. But I was so miserable and lonesome, I could eat very little.

We got off the bus at Wellington, a small town out on the Arizona desert. The welfare worker got a taxi, and it took us out to the edge of town. We stopped at a big house with a nice green lawn and garden. A gray-haired, motherly woman came to the door.

"This is Ruthie Wollcott, Mrs. Sanders," the welfare worker said. It was apparent that arrangements had been made in advance.

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"Yes, come on in, Ruthie," Mrs. Sanders said. "We were expecting you." In spite of myself I took an instant liking to Mrs. Sanders. She was so kind and gentle.

The welfare worker who'd brought me soon left, and I was alone in the home where I was to spend the next four years. Mrs. Sanders was not at all like my mother. She smiled and appeared friendly. I don't know what made me, but all at once the tears came to my eyes, and before I knew what was happening, my new foster mother had me in her arms and was patting my back. I sobbed uncontrollably on her shoulder while she murmured kind words in my ear.

"Ruthie, you're so sweet," she said with a catch in her voice. "I'm sure we're going to love you just like our own little girl that we could never have. God is so good to let you come to live with us."

"But it wasn't God's will!" I cried rebelliously. "It was the law and a mean old man—that judge and—"

"How can we be sure what God has in store for us?" she said, giving me an extra squeeze. "Sometimes God works in mysterious ways."

**EVERYTHING** was so different living with the Sanders. I didn't know what to do or how to act. I think Mrs. Sanders captured my heart completely when she took me shopping and bought me the most beautiful clothes. I had never seen anything so beautiful in my life. Nobody in Vermillion ever had clothing like that.

I could hardly believe it was me when the store clerk lead me before a mirror and I could look at myself. I turned to Mrs. Sanders. "You mean this—you're buying this for me, for my very own?" I asked in astonishment.

She beamed at me. "This is just the first dress we're going to buy you," she said. "There will be others. Now we'll have to pick out your school clothes, your shoes and underclothing."

I was glad I had time to get used to my foster home before I had to start to school. Mrs. Sanders showed me so many things. She told me so much about how they lived. She always ended our little confidential conversations with, "We want you to be very happy, Ruthie. I envy your mother having a little girl like you, and we want you to be happy while you're with us."

I went to church with Mr. and Mrs. Sanders every Sunday. They went to a big, beautiful church, and I was delighted to find that it was a Mormon church just like ours in Vermillion, but bigger.

Then there was one other thing that I noticed was different. When we went to church, I saw the mothers and fathers come with their children, and they all sat together in little family groups just like at home. But there was always just one mother in each family. I asked Mrs. Sanders about it one day when we got home from church.

A funny expression came over her face. "Ruthie, I'll have to tell you a little story, so you will understand something that is very important," she

said. "We call our church the Reformed Mormon Church. The one your family belonged to also was a Mormon church, but they call themselves Fundamentalists."

She paused, and her face was thoughtful. "Many years ago," she said, looking out into space, "when our people first came to Utah, they had a dreadfully hard time. The Indians killed some of the men. Then the Civil War came. A lot more of the young Mormon men went to fight. Only a few of them came back."

She stopped again and then went on. "There came a time when there were twice as many women as men in our settlements," she said. "We Mormons were very practical and realistic people. Our leaders said that with so many more women than men it would mean that all the extra women would be deprived of the joy of home, marriage, and children. The people put this problem before the leaders of the church. So the leaders of the church permitted some of the men who could afford it to marry a second wife, if the first wife did not object."

"That's the way it all got started, Ruthie," she said. "These grandfathers of ours had this problem, and that is the way they solved it."

Mrs. Sanders brightened as she went on. "After a while when the problem no longer existed," she said, "our leaders knew that such a practice was no longer necessary and would cause trouble. There came that time when it was no longer necessary to resort to plural marriage, so our church ordered it stopped. But there were a very few in our church who believed that plural marriage was still God's will like in Bible times, and they continued it. They call themselves Fundamentalists. We in the Reformed Church do not believe in it any more. We think that a man should have only one wife, Ruthie, that is why the people in Vermillion got into trouble with the law. Now do you understand?"

I didn't say a word to her. I turned and ran up the stairs to my room and threw myself across my bed. I felt like a ship that has suddenly lost its anchor. In my mind I struggled. Everything I had ever believed had been struck a cruel blow. I felt lost.

Into the night I thought and struggled to see the right. Mrs. Sanders's words kept coming back to me. Then I thought of my home—my mother, Sylvia, and Fanny. Something was terribly wrong.

I finally made up my mind. Mrs. Sanders had been good to me. I had to admit that to myself. But it looked to me then that it had all been to a purpose. It had been to wean me away from Mother and Father. It was all a part of a cruel plan. It was just like Father had said. All of this foster home business was just the persecution Father had spoken about. They were keeping me away from my real home.

Then there was Abby. Oh, how I wished I could see Abby! She would know what to do. Then the terrible loneliness swept over me, and not even the beautiful clothing and the kind

treatment of the Sanderses could make up for all that I felt. I longed to see my parents, Abby, and our little settlement at Vermillion.

Then I understood how Abby had felt the last time I had seen her. I remembered clearly what she had said, "Remember how brave Father was," she'd said, "and think how miserable Mother is all alone. Outsiders will tell you anything. It's all a way to persecute us and to break our beliefs in God." I remembered the extreme bitterness in Abby's voice, and now I found it echoed in my own heart.

Now I knew. Abby had been right. I understood because now I'd suddenly grown up, just like Abby. I felt strong.

The sense of confidence generated a kind of craftiness in my mind. Intelligent me I would have to stay with the Sanderses because the law was stronger than I was. But there would come a day, I said to myself.

**WITH** my return of confidence I knew I'd never again become weak and allow myself to think disloyal things about Mother and Father and about the teachings of God. How could I be weak in face of all the things I knew about God and all the wonderful things I'd have in heaven?

That night marked a change in my life with the Sanderses. And in another way there was something else beginning to happen. Twelve years old isn't very old to become real grown-up, but there were strange feelings within me that made me know I was no longer a child. My body was changing and filling out. It made me feel important.

Mrs. Sanders must have guessed what was going on because she gave me some books and she tried to explain what it meant to become a woman. It was a delightful, if a little frightening, adventure. How I longed to talk it over with Abby!

I did very well in school, but I found it difficult to mix with the others. Most of the boys and girls in my class were younger than I. The teachers said I was behind according to my age. I surprised them all by finishing the sixth and seventh grades in one year. I learned easily. But this school was so different from the one under Rebecca. Never once did the teacher mention the glory of us women and the long, pure white robes we would wear in heaven.

Mr. Sanders, especially, was delighted with my schoolwork. "Well, well," he said, "I guess we'll have to begin to think of college for our little Ruthie."

I was pleased to hear him praise me, but deep inside there was only one thing I really wanted. I wanted to go back to my people in Vermillion.

Then one day Mrs. Sanders mentioned something about my going back. "The court order that placed you with us, Ruthie," she said, "is good until you are sixteen. By then you will be almost through high school. After that we would like you to let us send you through college, just as if you were our own daughter. What do you think you'd like to study?"

"I don't know," I said, but in my

heart there was a leap of joy. I didn't want Mr. and Mrs. Sanders to send me to college. All I wanted was to go back to Vermillion where I'd been born and raised.

It seemed a long time until my sixteenth birthday, and I longed for it. I was a little hard pressed to explain my feelings to Mr. and Mrs. Sanders. I didn't want to hurt them, so I didn't say anything. I just waited for the time to pass.

And time passed fairly rapidly. There were so many things to do. My school-work took a lot of time, and I guess I worked hard to cover up the longings I had for the time when I could go home.

I'm a little ashamed now to look back and realize the pain I caused the Sanderses when my sixteenth birthday arrived. I didn't realize what it meant to Mrs. Sanders to have me stay with them. I didn't know until long afterward that they had contacted the authorities originally and asked that their home be selected as a foster home for the polygamist children taken from Vermillion.

The day I left the Sanderses, I was bursting with suppressed excitement. My release from the court had come through. I would be permitted to exercise my own wishes on what I wanted to do.

"We had hoped you'd stay with us, dear," Mrs. Sanders said with tears in her eyes. "You've been like our own daughter, and we hate to have you go away."

I felt terrible that she should feel this way, and it kind of spoiled going home for me. But I was determined. I'd dreamed of it, and now it was here.

"I just have to go to my parents," I said guiltily. "I feel that they need me. But I do thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything."

"God bless you, Ruthie," she sobbed, "but if you ever need a home, come back to us."

I hadn't realized what the Sanderses had done for me or what a different person I had become. Things happen slowly. And it wasn't until almost too late that the shock came that made me realize how I'd changed.

AS I rode the bus toward home, I could hardly contain my excitement. I thrilled at the red-tinted mountains and the broad wastelands, the canyons, the red cliffs, and the semi-desert vegetation that I had known all my life.

The bus stopped at Webster. This was where the trials had been held. It was also the largest town near Vermillion. There was no railroad or baseline to Vermillion. I knew I'd have to go to a garage and hire a car to take me up the winding mountain road to my parents and friends.

I walked up the street of Webster with my suitcase, which had been a present from the Sanderses before I left. It was full of clothes the Sanderses had bought for me. Things looked so different. Webster had changed in the four years I'd been away.

I went into a garage to see about get-

ting home. The man looked at me quickly when I told him I wanted to go to Vermillion.

"Yes—yes," he said, "one of my young mechanics knows the road. He used to live up there. He can take you." Then he paused a moment and looked me over before he went on. "Are you acquainted with Vermillion?"

"Why, of course," I said with a smile. "I was born there. I've been away. I'm just returning." His mouth flew open, but he didn't say anything else. I wondered why he acted like he did.

But he took my suitcase and led me out in back. The man who came to drive the car looked vaguely familiar.

"Ruthie?" he cried, and a smile spread over his face. Then I recognized him. It was Phil Collins. I remembered him. He was Joseph Collins's eldest son. He didn't say anything, and in a few moments we were out on the desert road heading west toward Vermillion.

"Ruthie, did you know your father just got out?" he asked. "About a month ago. I took him to Vermillion. All the others are out now, too. I guess they got out early on good behavior."

"Father's home?" He nodded. A thrill ran through me. We drove a little while. My mind was excited. I thought of home and everybody. How glad I would be to see them!

Then Phil spoke again. "Ruthie, are you sure you want to go back to Vermillion?"

"Why, of course, I am," I said in surprise. "I've got to go home—I've just got to, that's all."

"Oh, sure," he said quickly. "Of course, you want to see your folks. But what I mean is, I don't want you to stay in Vermillion."

"Well, why not?" I asked, a little annoyed.

"Well, it's not the place for a nice, pretty girl like you," he blurted out. "Ruthie, you've been away for a long time. You don't realize it. I don't really think you belong to that bunch of polygs. I know. I had to get out. I don't like the way they do things. My folks didn't want me to go, but I had to get out of there. And I always liked you, Ruthie, even when you were little."

When I was staying with the Sanderses, some of the boys in high school had tried to get fresh with me, but I always froze them with an icy stare. But Phil was one of my own kind. He was from Vermillion. It was kind of nice to have him say that he liked me. But what he said about not going back to Vermillion just didn't make sense.

I felt my face flush. I was surprised, but Phil went on. "I used to always kind of pretend to myself that you were my girl," he said. "And—and—well, after you've seen your folks, come back to Webster. You can get a job if you want to. Don't let them talk you into staying in Vermillion."

"Phil, don't be ridiculous," I said quickly. "The people in Vermillion are my people. I have to go back."

"I don't think they're your people any more," Phil said.

We drove a little while saying nothing, and then he spoke again. "I just

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don't think they are your kind of people," he said. "I changed my mind about the whole thing, and I'll bet you do, too."

That was all Phil said. I didn't think much more about it. I began to recognize old landmarks, and finally we came over a hill and there was Vermillion. It looked just like it always had. I'd dreamed about it thousands of times over the last four years.

Phil drove up in front of our house. As I got out of the car, he said, "Please, Ruthie, don't let them change you. Don't let them fill you full of this plural wives, glory-in-heaven stuff. I'm coming out to see you, Ruthie. If you need me, I'll help you."

But I was too excited right then to pay much attention to him and what he said. I ran in the front door, and the first person I saw was Mother. She looked older, and her hair was grayer than it had been. I threw my arms around her and sobbed, "Oh, Mother, I've been so homesick!"

But Mother never was one to show her feelings. "All right, Ruthie," she said quietly, "but don't make such a fuss. I can see that you're back." She held me off to look at me for a moment.

"I can see what they've done to you. I was afraid of it." Her lips became tightly pressed.

"But, Mother," I cried, "I came home just as soon as they'd let me!"

"It's about time," she said, pointing at my dress. "Look at all those silly clothes. I'll bet you've even got silly things next to your skin. To think what they've done to us God-fearing people! Why, you're all painted up like a hussy of the streets!"

I could have cried. I'd been so happy to get back. Now to have Mother say things like that almost killed me. But I was in for a number of rude surprises that day.

FATHER wouldn't even kiss me when he came in a few moments after that. "Get those sinful things off!" he ordered with a roar, pointing to my dress. "I'll not have them in my house." He turned to Mother. "Anna, get this daughter in the bedroom," he commanded. "Don't let her out until she is presentable in God's sight."

Mother had led and half pushed me into my old bedroom. "It's sinful, child," she said in an awed whisper. "It's a mortal sin to be dressed like that and let folks see you."

She practically dragged off the dress of which I had been so proud. It was one Mrs. Sanders had bought especially for me to wear home. The underskirt she ripped and threw in the corner. She even ripped off my panties and a dainty bra, and I finally stood there weeping and naked.

"Here—put these on," she said, handing me a pair of rough black bloomers, some knitted stockings and a big, long, sort of Mother Hubbard dress. "They're mine, but they'll fit you near enough until we can make some a little smaller."

My heart was like lead. Slowly I put on the things Mother told me to. She tore off a small ring that was on my left hand. It was set with my birth-

stone. Mr. Sanders had gotten it for me for my sixteenth birthday. Then with a rough towel she started in wiping my face.

By the feel of my face I knew the rouge was all gone, and it felt like part of the skin along with it. Then, as if she were handling some distasteful object, Mother wadded up all my clothes in a bundle. She emptied my suitcase and started for the kitchen. I finished putting on the clothes she gave me and came out of the bedroom door in time to see Mother thrust the last of my lovely clothes into the kitchen stove. I thought I was going to cry right there, but I didn't want to in front of Father.

"Well, this is some better," Father said as he eyed me up and down.

Father paused a moment and then went on. "I suppose they filled your head with as much dirty stuff as they let you put on your body," he said grinning. "Well, you can get it out right away. You're over sixteen, and it's high time for you to think of fulfilling God's will."

Mother interrupted. "Give the girl a little time to get back on her feet, Jacob," she said. "She's not to blame. She'd had a hard time, too, just like us."

"That will be enough from you, Annie, I'll not let you spoil this girl," he said harshly. "They've taken four years out of our lives. Now we've got to get on with God's mission."

I wondered if this could be some kind of bad dream and that soon I'd be waking up—or if it was really me, Ruthie Wollcott. Then it flashed on me what Phil had said. Now I understood what he'd meant.

Then I thought I saw Abby. I didn't know if she had come home or if she was still away. But it looked like her coming up the path to the house. I looked again, and my eyes fairly popped out of my head. It was Abby, but she was leading a child by the hand. And furthermore, I could tell by her swollen figure that she was about to have another baby.

"Abby—Abby!" I cried. "I'm home—I'm home!" I ran to the door to meet her. I gasped as I took her in my arms. Her face was blotched, and there were huge rings under her eyes.

"Abby, you're married," I cried. "How wonderful!"

"Oh, Ruthie, I'm so glad to see you," she said with a sigh.

Once Abby was in the house, Mother took over little Glen—that's what they called the baby—and then Abby and I were into our old bedroom, chattering like a couple of magpies.

Abby told her story. She had gone to a foster home like me, but she'd run off and come back to Vermillion. They'd hidden her in Elder Boskins's home. They thought if she was hidden there, they wouldn't be so likely to find her. The officers had come to look for her and actually searched our house, but they didn't find her, so eventually they went away.

"But, who did you marry, Abby?" I asked excitedly.

Abby smiled. "Hush, you mustn't say anything about it to—no body," she warned. "That is, particularly to any-

body who might be coming from outside to Vermillion. But when I came back and they hid me at Elder Boskins's house, I had a wonderful experience. While I was hiding there, Elder Boskins had a revelation. God told him that I should be his wife. So that very night I was sealed to him. He only has two other wives, and one of them is a weak cow—she can't have any children." There was grim satisfaction in Abby's laugh as she spoke of the unfortunate wife of Elder Boskins.

I KNOW my mouth must have been open in wonderment. And I couldn't think of anything to say, so Abby went on. "When I got pregnant, I couldn't hide any more, so Mother told the law officers at Webster I'd come home pregnant and that my baby's father was in Salt Lake City. They believed it. But that wasn't true. And, Ruthie, I'm so happy to have Elder Boskins's children. I want to have lots and lots more."

But Abby didn't look the part of a happily pregnant mother to me, and I couldn't get over seeing how miserable she looked.

I was still dumfounded at Abby's news. "But—but, Abby," I said, "Elder Boskins is so much older than you. He must be over sixty years old and—"

Abby was quick to reply. "But that doesn't make any difference. Ruthie," she said, mildly surprised. "I'm obeying God's law, and I'm lucky. God said I was to be sealed to him, so I was." She paused a moment. It was that simple to Abby. I marveled at the way she accepted it.

It was then that I first began to realize that Abby and I—even if we had been inseparable sisters—were worlds apart in our thinking. Very frankly, I just couldn't think it would be wonderful to be sealed as Elder Boskins's third wife. I couldn't even imagine myself being the first wife of a man like Elder Boskins.

It just didn't seem right. And I thought there must be something terribly wrong with me. Something terrible had happened to me in the last four years. Even when I thought of a situation of another wife sharing my husband, I felt little jealous prickles all over. I'd always been told that celestial marriage was God's will. I'd never thought of it as any different until Mrs. Sanders had told about how it had gotten started. But now I saw that my thinking had already changed.

"Oh, well, I guess it's too much to pray for," Abby said sadly. "It would be too much to expect of God. But it would be wonderful to raise our children together in our ordained mission."

I studied Abby, and now I was more certain than ever that what Abby would have me believe was joy in her heart was nothing less than stark misery. Her eyes told a much different story than her lips.

I talked to Abby for a long time. I told her everything that had happened to me in the last four years. Several times she placed my hand on her abdomen and let me feel the kick of her unborn child. I couldn't help but shud-

der a little each time. Abby didn't understand how I felt. She thought it was the thrill of anticipation.

"Oh, don't fret," she said reassuringly. "God will send some nice man in revelation. Ruthie, it is such a satisfaction to know that I am a part of God's plan."

In the days that followed, I tried hard to fit into the family. Mother gave me lots of work to do. But I looked around, and almost in a panic I saw what was happening.

Fanny and Sylvia still lived in the same little cabins. Their little girls, almost five years old now, were awfully cute and sweet. They each had my father's brown eyes and their own mother's hair. Sylvia was blonde, Fanny was dark. My own mother never went to their cabins, and I soon found out they didn't care about coming to ours. However, my father was very fair to each of his wives. He divided his nights equally among them.

I had been home for over a week when we had a caller one evening. It was Luke Langford. I remembered him. I'd gone to school and played with his children before I was taken away. He was one of the men in Vermillion who had not been arrested. He had only one wife, so he was not drawn into court.

The talk between him and Father didn't interest me, so I went for a walk. When I came home, he was gone.

"I would talk with you, Ruth," my father said seriously. I knew it was something of importance, because he called me Ruth instead of Ruthie.

"Yes, Father," I said.

"Luke Langford has had a revelation from God," he said in awe. "Elder Boskins has approved it, and he says it is God's will that you be sealed in marriage to Luke."

My heart stood still. I couldn't move. I had a vision of Luke Langford as I had been sitting there in the kitchen. He was almost bald. He was at least as old as my father, perhaps older. His face was wrinkled, and he had a long mustache. And then I remembered he'd had on his best suit of clothes.

**THEN** it burst on me. This thing that Father had spoken of had been the purpose of Luke's call. He'd come to see Father to discuss marrying me.

I don't know why it had the effect of making me slightly ill. The shock froze my tongue.

It was Father who broke the silence. "Come, daughter," he chided, "this is indeed wonderful. Langford's wife is of an age where she cannot have any more children. I think it will be a fine marriage for you. You will be well taken care of. I have given my approval. Recognize it as God's will and make me, as well as your heavenly Father, happy."

This had been our religious belief, taught from childhood—celestial marriage—sharing a husband with other women. Why did it sicken me like this?

"But—but, Father," I said, hesitating. "I'm afraid I don't love him—that I can't love him."

"Oh, it's not necessary to love at first," he said. "You love God. You have been brought up this way. You are obliged to follow the divine will of God. The revelation is God's will. Now it is your duty."

At some time in the years I'd spent with Mr. and Mrs. Sanders, I had come to believe that love should go into marriage—the love of one man for one woman. Could I ever go back and adjust to plural marriage now?

"I would like to go to bed to pray, Father," I said. I knew that kind of answer would satisfy him.

"I know that you will do the right thing, Ruthie," he said, with more tenderness than he'd shown since I'd gotten home.

It worked. He'd let me go. I hurried into my room and closed the door.

In the darkness I crept to my bed and sat down. I heard the low murmur of the voices of my parents back in the kitchen. Suddenly I was curious to know what they were saying. I crept back and pressed my ear to the crack of the door to the kitchen. Father's voice was low, but quite distinct. I listened spellbound to what he was saying. "I will not allow a delay, Anna," he said. "I can see that our daughter's faith is wavering. Her stay away from home spoiled her. The marriage will take place tomorrow. Once she is safely sealed to Luke, she will cause no more trouble. You will see."

Mother's voice came again, this time more pleading, but I couldn't understand what she said. But I could tell she wasn't entirely in agreement with Father about me.

"I will not discuss it, Anna," he said with finality. "Clothes will not make her any more securely married. We can't wait for clothes."

Some strange undefinable fear clutched at my heart. I made my way back to the bed, buried my face in the pillow and tried to think. Tomorrow—tomorrow—it drummed into my confused mind.

Why was I feeling this way? They had not changed. It was me. I should have felt happy following the wishes of my parents and the divine teachings of our church and our God. What was wrong with me? I felt frightened. I remembered the unhappy look on Abby's face. I compared my mother's tired, worn face with the smiling one of my foster mother. Why? Why? But there was no answer.

Then I thought of Luke Langford. His appearance was repulsive. Then I thought of his wife—she was old enough to be my mother, but too old to have children. How would I like to share her husband's attentions, his caresses?

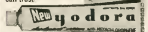
It wasn't cold in my room, but I shivered. I prayed to God, but there was no answer, only the vision of Abby's face full of misery and unhappiness. Was that for me? "Please, God, tell me," I prayed into my pillow. I knew I had to have time to think. Everything had to be all right. I just had to have time to get used to the idea.

Then I remembered Father's words. "The marriage will take place tomorrow."



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medical attention. I'm going to see that you get both and—"

"But Father will find me and take me back!" I cried. "I know he will. Please, Phil, please!"

"No he won't," he said doggedly. "I'm taking you over. Those polygs won't bother you. I know how to deal with them."

Before I could stop him, he was in the car and starting the motor. "I'm taking you over to my boss's house. They'll help us."

Mrs. Kelly, the wife of Phil's boss, was all sympathy. "You poor little girl," she said after Phil explained what it was all about. "Of course, we'll help. Those people in Vermillion think they own their children like a cow or a horse."

IN MINUTES I was in a nice soft bed, and Mrs. Kelly had stripped off my old clothing and bathed and soothed my scratches. She gave me some hot tea and something to eat. Then in spite of my worries, I drifted off in an exhausted sleep.

It was afternoon when I awoke. I was so stiff and sore I could hardly move. In a few minutes Phil came. He was in his greasy work clothes, and I could tell when he came in the room that he was excited about something. I turned toward him.

"Well, your father is in town," he said grimly. That's why I came over. We might just as well have this showdown right now. He'll be here in a few minutes. Everybody knows you're here. It won't take him long to find out. And he'll try to come and take you back with him."

I lay there trembling. I know my face must have shown my fear, because Phil got down on his knees beside the bed. He leaned over and kissed me on my lips. His lips felt warm and soft. When he kissed me, I could feel strength building up within me.

"Ruthie, I love you," he said, looking me squarely in the eye, "and I'm not going to let him take you back. I think I've always loved you. I knew I did when I took you out to Vermillion that day. That's why I didn't want you to stay out there. I knew what they'd try to do to you. I guess you had to find out for yourself."

Just then Mrs. Kelly came in. "Your father wants to see you, Ruth," she said.

I looked at Phil. I was willing to let him handle things from now on, so I said nothing.

He turned to Mrs. Kelly. "Sure, let him come in," Phil said grimly. "He can see her, but, brother, that's all." There was a hard note of warning in his voice.

Father entered the room with another man. His eyes blazed when he saw me. I shrank when he looked my way. "You will come home with me, Ruth," he said firmly.

Phil stood up in front of the bed between Father and me. "Ruth stays right here, Mr. Wollcott," he said icily. "She doesn't want to go home with you, so she doesn't have to."

"Ruth is my daughter, and she is un-

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der age," my father said angrily. "Legally, I can take her home. If you try to interfere, I will call the sheriff."

The sight of my father seemed to make me go limp—to sort of paralyze me. I lay there in silent fear. To defy Father was one thing I'd never done in my life. Always, even to disobey him meant swift, harsh punishment. I didn't want to go with him, yet I feared I might have to.

"That will be just fine, Mr. Wollcott," Phil said. "I want you to call the sheriff. When the sheriff comes into this house to take Ruthie, I'll tell him you have gone back to living with your three wives in Vermillion. That means you're still practicing polygamy, and that can get you another stretch in the penitentiary."

I was quick to note that Father's attitude softened after Phil's threat. I knew that Father, no matter how determined, did fear the law. That was the bit of encouragement I needed at that point.

It was up to me to take my stand. I'd thought when I left home that I had to have time to think this thing through. But now suddenly I knew I could never go through with what he had planned for me. I knew I had the unhappy choice now between my parents, my friends, and my religion and Phil Collins. I guess I didn't know the real meaning of love, so I didn't know I loved Phil. But something made me choose his protection.

"No—no, Father," I said in a hoarse-

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Betty dated others occasionally, but her yen for Dave was so well known that no fellow tried to compete. It wasn't until Dave became officially engaged, two years after high school graduation, that she gave up.

Are you making the mistake of throwing away your best courting years or are you investing these years carefully? The answer you give might make the difference between a good marriage and a bad one or no marriage at all. Now that young people are marrying at an early age, a girl can't afford to waste many years on a Mr. Wrong or a Disinterested Dave.

Here are some questions that could help you find out if the fellow you are dating is marriage-worthy. The answers might reveal some facts that hurt. They might also make you even more certain that your steady is wonderful.

1. Does he promise an engagement ring, but find a last minute excuse for its absence? The engagement ring that doesn't appear on schedule usually never shows up. A conscientious fellow will produce a promised ring even if it means debt. And don't forget, many smart young people save the cost of a ring and announce their intention to marry at a party or in the newspaper. A plan like this should be discussed.

2. Can you argue? "Argue? Why should we argue?" you might wonder. Because everybody does it, even husbands and wives who love each other. Does your steady sulk if you disagree with him? Must he always be right or feel his masculinity is challenged? Does he listen to your views with respect even though he disagrees with them? Does he refuse to discuss an unpleasant subject? The right answers to these questions are important if your marriage is to be a happy one.

3. Can you picture yourself at the breakfast table with him? Many couples who enjoy dating together often find marriage dull. Petting can cover up a lack of mutual interest. Activities like bowling, movies, and double and triple dating don't give a couple much chance for conversation. Test your relationship by planning an occasional home date. If, after a dozen tries, you still find it boring and awkward, give him that "we have nothing in common so why waste each other's time" explanation. You'll both benefit.

4. Is he a job-hopper? Does he keep a job for only a few months? Is he complaining about the job he has although he's only been at it a month or two? Does he always picture himself doing someone else's job better? If the answer is "yes," beware! It's no fun to have a chronically unemployed husband.

Every young man doesn't find a suitable job on the first try, but most men give a job a chance. When they want a change, they try to better themselves by taking night courses or by learning a trade. They are willing to make sacrifices to establish themselves in good positions, whereas the job-hopper thinks a change is all that is needed to make his working days happy and profitable.

5. Have you met his family? If you have been going with a fellow for a few months, you deserve to meet his family.

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His family background has influenced and will influence him, and if you marry him, you will be part of that family. You should have the chance to decide how much he is influenced and if you really want to join the family circle. When a man never invites a girl to meet Mom and Dad, he might have something to hide—like a wife and kids. Be sure there are no family skeletons.

6. Does he take you out only occasionally even though you have been dating for several months? Betty L., wasted two years being a Dependable Dora and hoping Dave would fall as hard as she had. If he doesn't come to share your deep feelings after a few months of infrequent dating, he probably won't. If a fellow really is snowed by a girl, he doesn't need any encouragement to call her the next week—or even the next night!

7. Is he saving money? The fellow who has a date with the bank every few weeks is a good fellow for you to have a date with. Take a long look at the man who thinks money is strictly for spending on auto accessories, clothes, and evenings out with the boys. It's a sure sign that marriage isn't on his mind.

8. Does he borrow money from you? If so, hesitate fast. This fellow is not only out for an evening's companionship, but for someone to pay his bills. The girl who finances a man cheapens herself. She soon feels she is at his mercy because he owes her money she can't afford to lose. Limit your lending to a

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quarter when he's too embarrassed to hand a toll-taker a five—and notice whether or not he pays it back.

9. Does he drink or gamble heavily? A man who buys a drink when you go out or who goes to the races a few times a year will make as good a husband as the fellow who doesn't touch a drop and has never fed the horses one bale of hay. But the guy with the tip sheet under his arm or the one who can't get through the day without a drink is a different

story. Either he avoids marriage like a plague (a kindness to the women in his life) or he makes a tragically poor husband. Spare yourself the role of reformer! Even the professionals sometimes fail.

Consider these points now and avoid disappointment later. If your beau doesn't measure up, don't wait for him to change. After all, the years for courting are short ones, and his future will mold your future. **• THE END**

## He Picked Out a Husband for Me

(Continued from page 19)

but I think if he had lived in some country where it was allowed, he'd have taken another wife—or a dozen if necessary—to get some sons.

But Pop stuck with Mom. As I said, he loved her in his way, and he loved the way she tiptoed through life, careful not to step on his toes, always letting him know she was in awe of him, as well as loving him.

Millie and me? Well, being born of such a combination gave us curious traits, and even though I followed with Mom's timid acceptance of Pop and his ways, underneath was a strength that was to astonish even me.

When Pop took Mom home as a bride, it was to the old homestead on the switchback above Richburg. The sprawling old house faced the clearing where the sheep barns and pens humped up toward the cider mill. Pop's family had owned the farm since the land was cleared, and no matter how hard times got, every acre was boarded for sons and grandsons—the future generations. The first World War had taken all the sons but Pop, and Gramp, who had once run hundreds of sheep and planted the big orchards, had let things run down.

Pop, full of determination to expand and be ready for his sons, sold off only the ram lambs, keeping the ewes to increase the flocks, and began slashing away at the undergrowth in the orchards. My earliest memory of him is his coming in past dark to shovel his supper down, then fall exhausted on the couch in the living room, often too tired to get up and go to bed, moving only when dawn announced the start of a new day.

Millie and I learned early to herd sheep and tend the frolicking lambs, and in the fall we gathered wagonfuls of apples for the hungry cider presses. What cider Pop didn't peddle locally was barreled for vinegar, and Millie and I played hide-and-seek around the vinegar barrels in between loads.

Pop was fond of us, but we were brought up on his dreams and plans for a son—or sons—and I wasn't more than eight when Pop took Mom over to the hospital and left her overnight for some tests. "We want a baby brother, and this is the quickest way to get one." Mom promised as she kissed us good-by.

It was more than a day, but it seemed like a week before Mom came home. I can see her yet, dragging up the path from the mailbox—she had ridden home with the mailman—her head bent, her shoulders slumped, looking twice her

age. I remember her hug as Millie and I ran to her, and I remember all too well the sick hopelessness on her face as she looked up at Pop's question and shook her head.

"Wasn't there something they could do? Sizzling Moses, they gonna give up this easy?"

"There's nothing anyone can do," I felt Mom's fingers bite into the tender flesh on my shoulders. "I'm no good to you, Joe—not for having sons."

I said Pop was strong, and I'd seen him hoist full barrels of cider onto the wagon with scarcely a grunt, but now I saw the full strength of his anger unleashed. Bellowing like an outraged bull, he pushed by Mom and grabbed the ax that stuck in the chopping block and knocked the lambs' feeding racks to bits with a mighty sweep, then jumped over the pieces and swung the ax into the bottom tier of barrels stacked against the cider mill. They popped like peas from the pod, and the whole pile thundered down around him, one striking him on the shoulder, spinning him around, but he kept swinging the ax, beating away at them. After one frightened gasp, Mom gathered Millie and me to her and ran to the house, slamming the door against the echoing crash as the ax made kindling of all his work.

He didn't make a sound. The deathly quiet of his terrible anger was worse than the destruction, and we hid against Mom's skirts, clinging to her until the noise ceased and our ears strained against the silence. Then we heard the shrill screech of his whistle as he called Nell, and she galloped from the pasture while we ran to the window just in time to see him grasp her mane, swing upon her, and thunder out of sight down the road.

I DON'T remember his coming home, but he must have been roaring drunk, for all that winter he drank while the cider mill stood silent and the sheep bleated from their pens. Finally Mom huddled Millie and me up, and we struggled, dragging forkfuls of hay to poke into the feeding racks to stop their hunger.

Our hunger was worse—not for food, because Pop now and then brought in a feed sack of groceries and tossed it on the floor, and Mom had a cellar full against the winter, but it was hunger for the Pop that used to roll us around on the floor and brag how puny we'd seem against the strapping brother we'd have

one day. He didn't do that any more.

While Pop wasn't mean to us now, we must have realized that the haunted emptiness in Mom's eyes, the trembling of her lips, the gray, washed-out age that showed in her face was from the change in Pop. We knew she still loved us, but it was a burned-out kind of love now. She never sang over the washing or made up stories to tell us while we pulled weeds as she hoed the garden, and when Pop was home, she ignored us while she waited on him, scurrying to see to his needs before he mentioned them, like a kicked dog hoping for a pat or a kind word.

We never had friends at school and no family gatherings at home, so life was a kind of miserable nothing for Millie and me. Sheep-shearing time and threshing time were like a wonderful dream come true to us, for Pop stayed sober then and laughed and talked with the crews while Millie and I hung around and watched them work, savoring the warm, friendly atmosphere that seemed to wrap around the farm. But they would leave and that sober, laughing Pop would be gone, too, and the dreary life would settle around us again.

Pop had refused to let me start school until I was eight and the law forced him to, so I was sixteen when I entered high school and took home the announcement that girls were forbidden to wear jeans at school. Pop had dressed Millie and me in jeans and flannel shirts so long we didn't have a dress between us.

"What's this mean, Jennie? Sizzling Moses! Telling us what the younguns gotta wear!" His bleary eyes followed the printed words before he crumpled the paper in a big fist and tossed it into the coal scuttle by the stove. "By thunder, they won't tell me! Bad enough to know they're girls, without having it rubbed in under my hide by starched—"

"Pa—please—They're young ladies already," Mom began timidly, then gathered strength as she put an arm around each of us. "First thing we know, they'll marry off and be gone. Let's not make trouble for them. I'll see they get out of dresses soon if they come home nights."

Pop wasn't listening now. He stretched his head forward on his thick neck, staring at me, his eyes squinted up until I could scarcely see the network of red veins around each one. "Marrying, eh? Yeah—" He stood up and reached out one ham of a hand and lifted my chin up. "And pretty, too, pretty as your ma used to be."

I stood still, scarcely breathing, feeling his fingers against the sides of my neck, and a shiver went through me, thinking that with a mighty twist he could snap my head off, and I rolled my eyes toward Mom just as he let loose suddenly, and I fell forward, my head tipping heavily.

"Get around lively while I harness Nell. Get you some fancy clothes to wear," he said as he went out of the house, his step lighter than it had been in a long time.

Mom and Millie and I stared at each other. "He means it, Mom?" I asked. "Some dresses—skirts and things like other girls wear!"

"I don't know—" Her voice trailed off. Then, shaking herself, she spoke briskly, "Hurry up. If your pop's made up his mind, he's made up his mind!"

Pop dragged both Millie and me into the big clothing store and pushed us toward a smartly dressed woman. "Fix these girls up for school. Whatever they need." He handed me a wad of money. "Get in the buggy once you're done and wait for me." He lumbered out, leaving us all gasping—he hanging tight to the money he had thrust into my hand.

Millie and I just plain wallowed in clothes. Once the saleslady saw the money and found we had next to nothing in girls' wear, she tackled us like her life was at stake. Sweaters, skirts, some dresses, a lot of underthings, and even snowy socks and smart new shoes were added to the pile. I was amazed to find what all we needed and began to worry before she was done. I never had seen such a lot of clothes.

Going home, Pop, smelling strongly of the wares of Oscar's Bar, leaned forward, urging Nell to a trot and talked. "Like as not we'll have a wedding one of these days. Your ma wasn't but sixteen—and weddings mean sons, and grandsons."

"Gotta be fixing up the press, and have to turn some of that meadow back from pasture. Flock's run down—say, how about that! Get me a son yet, I betcha!" And for the first time in years Pop whistled as he jogged Nell homeward.

It was like he had turned over a new leaf. Once again he worked like he was a one-man army, attacking the run-down, neglected farm. Mom watched him with cautious eyes and looked worried whenever she looked at me and Millie. But she only shrugged to our questions, turning them aside.

It wasn't half so easy for me to turn aside Pop's questions. Each morning he surveyed Millie and me as we were ready to walk down the switchback to the bus, and every morning he beamed approval. Every night around the supper table he questioned me.

"How many boys in your class, Peg? All blind, I betcha, or else they'd be flocking after you like a swarm of bees!" Other times he'd ask grimly, "You dressed as good as the rest of the girls? You look okay now? When're you bringing home a young man to take you riding or to a movie show?"

ONCE again anyone that dropped in at the farm heard Pop explode about the day when he and his sons-in-law would show the country how to run a farm. I began to feel self-conscious about every boy that looked at me and couldn't answer if one spoke. That's when Pop hired Gurr Weston to go along with the threshing crew in Pop's place. He was tied to the sheep and the orchard, he bragged.

Gunner was just a bit older than I, but he didn't go to school any more. His folks were living in a shack on the other side of the hill from the switchback and had always depended on Gunner, who hunted wild rabbits—in and out of season—for them to eat. They'd been depending on him from the time he was big enough to lug a gun and aim straight.

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He ran a trap line, too, and hunted coons at night—wild as an Indian, Mom often said, but an honest, hard-working boy. I had seen him now and then, dark, uncut hair falling across his face, which was burned brown as an Indian's, too. He'd often jog along beside the school bus, his gun in his hand, his teeth flashing as he laughed aloud at the driver, who had to take it easy down the narrow switchback road. I suppose all of us kids envied him for not going to school, but outside of that I gave him little thought.

Pop was stone sober most of the time now. His muscles were hardening up again, and he walked a loose swing, the old shuffle gone, and now he teased Millie and me and joked with Mom. Even Millie and I changed. We whispered about boys now, arguing over who was the best looking at school, speculating on how we would behave if one should ever ask us for a date—girl talk and girlish giggles, which brought a smile of contentment to Mom's worn face.

The very first night after Gunner came in off the threshing crew, Pop ordered him to stay for supper. While they washed up, he shouted for Mom to fetch his shears—he kept a set of trimming shears for the sheep—and Pop sat Gunner down in front of the kitchen range and sheared off handfuls of his dark thatch until he looked almost naked, his whole face showing, and I stared at him, astonished. He was good looking—oh, really handsome! Every time I stole a look at him across the table, I felt a little prickle of delight.

"What you going to do with all the money you got coming?" Pop asked Gunner as he passed him the hot gingerbread.

"Get me a jalopy. Know where's one—" He ducked his head and took a bite of gingerbread to cover his embarrassment.

"A car, eh? Say, we ought to have a car. How about that, girls?"

"You don't drive," Mom stated flatly, sparing us need to answer.

"Peggy is big enough for a license. You'd teach her, wouldn't you, Gunner?" Pop's teasing laugh made Gunner's face flush. I wanted to tell Pop to stop bothering him, and I dug an elbow into Millie's side as she giggled at him.

Gunner nodded, lifting his eyes to mine, and I caught my breath. There was a spark, a lively little spark in them that told me he had looked at me before and liked what he saw.

I don't know where or how Pop got the money, but he bought us a car. Gunner's money didn't stretch far enough to get the jalopy he spoke of, or else his folks got it from him, for the next time I saw him, he was riding the sway-backed old mare Jake Harper had been trying to practically give away to keep from baying to winter.

Pop fooled around with the car, scaring the daylight out of Mom by narrowly missing the watering trough as he spun the car around the yard before he asked Gunner to give me a driving lesson.

I was terrified of the car, and when Pop ordered me to slide under the wheel

and let Gunner give me a lesson, I backed up against the fender, my trembling hands behind me. Pop knew we had driver training in high school—he'd had fits over the extra taxes he claimed it made—but he didn't realize that all I had was the book work. You don't touch a car until you have a learner's permit.

"Let me drive first. I'll show you," Gunner said kindly, avoiding all the jokes Pop was making about sitting too close to me or parking to watch the sun go down. I was glad to shut the door against his words, although I had the queerest feeling that here I was alone with a boy, shut away from everyone, the car being just like a wall around us.

Gunner explained every move he made, and I tried to act as if I understood, but all I really saw were his brown hands on the wheel, his long, lean legs beside me. Even the scuffed work shoes working the pedals caught my eyes. We drove up the top of the switchback and stopped. Below us the orchards were heavy with reddening apples in the clearings, and all around the thick woods, spiced with evergreens, spread like a painted picture.

Gunner caught his breath. "Pretty—!— You see why I like the woods—trapping and hunting?" I couldn't speak, and he glanced at me, "You think I'm strange, too?"

"Oh, no! No!" I put my hand out toward him, then let it drop back into my lap. We didn't say more, but I had the feeling that both of us heard more than words, the queer throb of our hearts, the flood of awakening interest and awareness.

AS WE drove back—me at the wheel—Pop grinned like I was all set to get my license. "I'll take a lot of lessons, but she learns well," Gunner told Pop.

"Good," Pop winked at me. "You think you could stick around, Gunner, maybe bunk up here?"

Gunner nodded thoughtfully. "No need for me to be home. I'll stay until trapping season if you need me."

"Sure, sure. Gotta get the presses in shape—and time for lots more lessons, eh, Peggy girl?" Pop laughed.

So Gunner was there, tall and brown in the sunlight, helping Pop every night when Millie and I got home from school, and there to take me for a lesson, although he never stopped the car again or said anything personal. But he was there—there to hear Pop's plans for a son-in-law, his extravagant praise for everything Gunner did, and the buildup he kept giving me.

Gunner was there the night of the first fall storm that whipped up the hill. "Gunner, shut the sheep in," Pop told him. "I'll ride Nell up and get the spring lambs down, and you and Peg run them into the shed. Give them a good bedding down. He was off, the wind tearing the shrill whistle for Nell from his lips.

Mom and Millie heeded for the leaky attic, their arms full of pans, and I ran after Gunner toward the sheep barn.

The fierce wind tore at the forks of bedding as Gunner and I carried them from the barn to the lamb sheds. After the last trip we leaned panting against

the door while jags of lightning cut the dark sky and the sheep bleated contentedly as they found and began munching the mangers full of hay. Gunner moved toward the small window where he could watch for the lambs, and I followed, pulling my damp scarf loose and shaking out my hair.

As I stepped up beside him, the yard was lighted by a blue-white flash, and as I lifted startled eyes, I found Gunner looking down at me—and I was in his arms.

We stood still. I didn't dare breathe as his hands tightened around my waist, and a long tremble ran through him as he lifted me tighter against him and my lips met his. The storm faded away. There was nothing outside this—this bone-melting, lip-searing passion, and although my limp knees buckled and gave way, he held me there, frozen to him. There was a surge of aching sweetness through me as I realized how perfectly I fitted into his arms, how naturally I answered each caress. His lips traveled down my cheek, against the hollow of my throat where my damp blouse clung, and his words were a moan. "Love me, Peggy, love me." I was a limp, passive answer to that, all of me swooning against him, completely his—completely—

The startling bleat of the lambs might be what saved us—or maybe Gunner would have stopped. I don't know. I only know that all the pent-up emotions of sixteen years broke loose in me, and I was helpless in his arms. He held me away for a minute, and I memorized every line of his face. As I felt his hands slide down my arms and away, I knew there would always be a blank, empty feeling inside me when I wasn't with him.

There wasn't a chance for any talk later, for we ran into the storm, circling the stubborn lambs, pushing at them, coaxing them into the dark sheds, and as we shut the last one in, Pop rode up on Nell, soaked to the skin, his old felt hat dripping rain over his face, his shirt plastered to his back. He and Gunner hurried Nell inside for a rubdown while I ran ahead to the house.

Mom and Millie talked to me, and I must have answered, and then we all ate supper. But when I looked at Gunner's hands—those hands that had held me—I trembled until I could scarcely eat, and later in bed I lay wrapped in weak ecstasy, remembering his face, his kisses, his arms—

MOM cried a bit, telling me sixteen was too young to get married, but Pop was like a man drunk on happiness. He shouted, he laughed, he roared. "Got me a son, I betcha!" And before Gunner had hardly told him, he was shouting for old Nell, ready to ride for the preacher. He was blazing mad to find there were things like blood tests and a three-day wait and papers to sign before we could get married. You would have thought the law was made especially to spite him and one day's delay meant the end of the world!

"You giving Pop a son or getting a husband?" Millie asked, but I laughed at her. I laughed at everything—Where

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would we live? How could Gunner support a wife? What about his folks? My schooling—Nothing mattered but a long, lean, brown-faced boy with sweet, tender lips that could kiss up a storm in my heart.

Pop had everything settled. We'd live right here with them, of course. He needed Gunner, and I might as well go on to school until—and he shouted with glee at the way Gunner's face reddened—until the kids began to come. Maybe we'd have money to fix up a couple of rooms in the back part of the house for us, but he turned down Mom's suggestion that we might want the old tenant house beyond the King apple orchard.

"They're just kids! Why would they want to be away from us? Plenty of room, and Gunner wants to be here where he has a man to talk to!" He threw his arm around Gunner's shoulders, and Gunner looked at him like he had a gold-crowned head.

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a suit. I dreamed of how nice it would be, walking into that dance on Gunner's arm, all my schoolmates seeing what a handsome man I'd caught.

"Eat, Gunner. You and Pop can talk all day tomorrow," I hurried him at the supper table, feeling excitement rise in me.

Gunner laughed at me, and I clasped my hands over my thudding heart. How I loved him—that laugh, his white teeth flashing in his tanned face, his eyes, startling blue and loving as they met mine. Oh, how I wished we had a little place of our own, so at times like this I could climb into his lap and whisper to him! Here Gunner would be embarrassed, and Pop disgusted.

"Come on, I coaxed as he finished the gooseberry pie.

"What you up to?" Pop asked lazily. "You're in a great tear tonight."

"It's the dance—member, I told you?" Millie reminded him.

"Oh—" he blinked, then went in and juggled the radio knobs.

Gunner finally finished, and I locked my hands over his arm, scarcely touching the steps as we went upstairs.

Millie was carefully combing out the last curl in my hair when we heard Pop shout up the stairs. "You seen that hottie of applejack, Gunner?"

I heard Gunner's muffled no as I whisked off the towel over my shoulders and started across the hall to our room to show Gunner my dress. Pop stood at the bottom of the stairs. "Ask Gunner if he's had that hottie of applejack from the medicine cupboard in the barn."

"He already said no, Pop." I almost floated across the hall and tapped on our door, then swung it open and stood there, watching Gunner's face. He shook his head, his hands busy with his tie suddenly still, and as I moved toward him, he opened his arms and pulled me to him.

"Gunner!" Pop's bellow shook the room, and Gunner jumped, but I kept my arms around his neck and kissed the point of his chin. "Don't go—please—"

For a moment he hesitated, then wrinkled his nose at me. "Silly—I'll see what he wants. Be right back and he took my arms from around his neck, I had a great cold chill, and I wanted to scream at him, beg him not to go, not to answer.

I HADN'T moved when he bounced back up the stairs. "Look, Peggy, I gotta run Pop into town. Nell's got the colic, and she won't let Pop dose her until he puts a snort of applejack down her first—you know how she is. I won't be but a half-hour. You be all set, and we'll be there in lots of time."

It seemed as though my heart were stuck in my throat, and I knew my cheek was like ice under his lips as he kissed me.

Millie was in the hall shouting at Gunner as he went down the stairs, then with a whirl of skirts she burst into the room. "Why did you let him go? You know how Pop is. Get down there and stop him!" She gave me an impatient push, and I stumbled down the stairs and out the front door.

"Wait, Gunner—I—" The motor was

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churning and I leaned in the car window. "Let me go with you. We can pick Millie up when we bring Pop back." "Stay here!" Pop leaned across Gunner. "Fool woman! We'll be back. Get in the house and wait for him! Sizzling Moses, let's go, Gunner!" Pop leaned back, clear that the matter was settled.

Gunner nodded and waved as he put the car in gear and spun out onto the road.

"Oh, honey!" Millie put her arm around me. "You should have climbed right in."

"He'll be back for sure. He knows how I've planned on this—" My voice trailed away, and I waited for her to reassure me, but she shrugged as we went inside, and then said, "Bob's going to pick me up if we don't show up by nine—I had a feeling. Say, Peg, if they aren't back, will you go along with us? Bob can find a friend to dance with you, and once you get started, you'll have lots of partners."

Millie's eyes sparkled, and I was tempted—oh, how tempted! To dance, my pink skirts flying, to see lights, hear music, but I knew the answer. Without Gunner it wouldn't be fun—so fun at all.

"He'll be back. Pop has Nell on his mind." Moon stopped rocking. "Gunner is a fine boy—but such a boy! He can't refuse Pop—especially now, being Nell's sick—" But she sighed and didn't meet my eyes.

Funny, the way she said that. I

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and I went by and tried it. I could have some furniture from here, and—"

"What's got into you? You and your mom have words?"

"No—no, Mom and I didn't have any words," I said wearily, but as I lay there beside him, feeling the strong, lean length of him beside me, I shivered, wondering how I could go on living this way. Gunner would always be Pop's boy first, my husband second, and Pop would rule him and my kids, too. This baby beneath my heart would never belong to us. My lips moved in a prayer—a fervent prayer for God to help me—help me—

Poor Mom gave up. "There's no use, Peggy. If we had relatives, if Millie wasn't moving around all the time—But there's no place for you to go. You can't earn a living, and I don't have money, not even a little. You might as well make the best of it and tell them about the baby. I'll stand by you all I can."

I didn't have to tell them—not in words, that is. One morning I went to the mailbox, hoping for a letter from Millie, and the morning nausea rose in my throat and I doubled up, almost falling. Mom caught sight of me and shouted to Pop and Gunner, who were running the first load of apples through the press.

"Stay there!" Pop shouted at Gunner as he jumped from the wagon and ran to us. Gunner stayed. But he kept looking at me, and I wanted to scream at him to come to me, that it was his place beside me, not Pop's!

"Sizzling Moses, what's wrong with her?" Pop shouted at Mom as he half carried us toward the house, but Mom didn't answer, and when her eyes met his, I knew he read the answer.

"Gonna get me a grandson, I betcha!" He whooped as he let go of me and threw his hat in the air, then shouted to Gunner, "Roll that wagon back out the way—we'll finish later. Come on, boy, we got a pile of celebrating over-due!"

Gunner shoved the wagon ahead, just as Pop said. And I watched him, feeling as if the wheels were grinding over me. Why hadn't he come to me? Why roll the wagon ahead as Pop said, unless—oh, no, no, he wouldn't go off with Pop! Not now, not when he saw I was sick!

I shook off Mom's arm as she tried to pull me into the house. I clung to the edge of the porch with grim determination, swallowing down my sickness, my eyes glued on Gunner. Pop already had hopped into the car, and, grinning at Gunner, he tapped the horn impatiently.

Gunner ran toward the car—and toward me, his face glowing, his eyes showering me with love. But just as he passed the car door, Pop shouted, "Come on, boy—this news won't wait!"

Gunner's feet lagged, then stopped, and with one beseeching look and a wave of his hand he turned and got into the car.

I didn't see them go, for I lay on the steps, barely conscious of Mom pressing cool cloths to my head or the sharp whiff of the ammonia she held under my nose. My ears roared, my head

span, and my heart shrieked up inside.

I pleaded with Mom, "Help me, Mom, help me! I can't bear it!"

"It's a woman's place to bear things—you'll learn that soon enough. I can't help—I've nothing to help with." And she spread her work-roughened hands helplessly.

No, Mom had worked all her life for Pop and hadn't a thing, not even happiness, to show for it. I knew other women had some money—they expected it, and their husbands expected to give it to them, but not Pop, so not Gunner, either! I could resent everything now, every little miserable thing that Mom endured.

I moved my things to Millie's room that night and turned my head from Gunner's pleas. "It didn't mean a thing, honey. Pop just wanted to celebrate. Gosh, a baby—don't you see?"

Gunner didn't see—he'd never see how I felt, how hurt I was and would be, for as long as he continued to run whenever Pop whistled.

I WAS well into my eighth month when the sheep barn burned to the ground. Gunner had been off running his line and had come in with a pile of extra lovely pelts. He laid them out one by one for me, telling me how much they'd bring, laying aside a few especially nice ones which he said shyly would make a bunting for the baby.

"Sizzling Moses! You made a pile, boy!" Pop thumped Gunner between the shoulders. "How about that, Peg—got us quite a boy, eh?"

Pop hadn't paid any attention to my coolness to him or Gunner. Knowing him, he probably shrugged it off as a woman's temperament at a time like this. Now he slobbered himself clean in the kitchen sink, calling to Mom to get some supper on the table and he'd run out and check the sheep. "Stay right here, Gunner," he ordered as Gunner started to get up. "Tell Peg about your trip. We'll run down to Oscar's soon's we eat." And he was out, with a slam of the door that made the kerosene lantern in his hand flicker.

"Don't go tonight, Gunner," I pleaded, smoothing the soft fur of one pelt he had laid aside for the baby. "Maybe we can talk, make some plans. I'll have the baby soon." It was the first reference I had made about the baby. I knew how sweet it was of Gunner to save these pelts special—just a sign of how really sweet and tender he could be if Pop would leave him alone.

"Pop said—well, maybe he'll forget it once he gets his supper down. I'd like to talk—I've missed talking to you, Peggy." He took my hand and held it against his chin, his eyes aflame with love, and I leaned toward him, my lips curved to meet his kiss when Pop's heavy boots hit the porch. Gunner jerked back, grinning bashfully.

Pop ate like a forest fire licking its way through dry timber, and he kept hurrying Gunner, who poked his food around, his troubled glance on my face every few minutes, and I could scarcely swallow for hoping he'd have the courage to tell Pop no for once.

As Pop left the table, he mumbled,

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"Hurry, boy," through his last mouthful.  
"We could wait until tomorrow night.  
I'm tuckered out, made better than five  
miles through—" Gummer began.

"Do you good—liven you up a bit. You ain't no petticoat man, bashed out by a five-mile hike." Pop tugged his can on.

"I—Peg sorta wanted me to—" Gunner began again, then at Pop's laugh, flushed under his deep tan.

"Sizzling Moses! She's got her ma to talk to! Don't you knuckle under now, else you'll be tied down for life. Come on, come on—" he insisted, jiggling the doorknob.

With a hang-dog look Gunner slowly got to his feet and came around the table, dropping his hand on my shoulder and squeezing. "I won't be long. We can talk when I get back."

I didn't raise my head, but his fingers burned my shoulder like hot coals and I put my hand up and pushed his hand away.

"If I had a place—any place—any place," I whispered bitterly to Mom as we did the dishes. My eyes felt like dry wells, and I couldn't cry. My hurt and despair went too deep for tears.

"This is your home. If one's got to get out, I say it should be Gunner," Mom said tonelessly.

My home—Gunner had taken my home! What about his? Quickly I told Mom what I planned to do, then hurried

to pack a few things. I stuffed the baby things Mom and I had ready into an old brown shopping bag, and I was ready to start. I begged Mom not to go with me, but she said she didn't mind the walk back up the switchback—she'd take the lantern. That was the first we missed the lantern, and I told her I hadn't seen Poo bring it back.

Mom opened the door, and I saw it—great, billowing clouds of smoke from the sheep shed. Mom screamed and ran ahead of me to open the doors and let the crowded, frightened sheep out, and I hurried clumsily to dip pails of water from the watering trough, but it was no use. We stood and watched as the sheep trampled each other getting out, then the draft from the open doors burst the flames through the roof, and in a few minutes it ceased in.

If I'd had doubts before, I had none now. Pop in his haste to get to town, to brag over Gunner's luck, had left the kerosene lantern burning in the sheep-barn full of hay and cobwebs, and if the wind had been right and Mom and I hadn't noticed, it would have caught the house and Mom and I would have burned in our beds. What kind of place was this to bring a baby?

I kissed Mom quickly, fighting back tears, and left her there in the pale moonlight by the watering trough, where she could dip up water to carry to wet down the sides of the haystack. At least that way the sheep would have food for the winter, even if their only shelter left was the lambing pens.

**MY ARMS** were numb, my legs like lead before I made it down the switchback and up the side hill to Gummer's family's shack. I hadn't seen his folks but once since we married.

"Peggy!" Mrs. Weston peered out the door, seeing the bag and looking around no, then shifting her eyes back to the bag. "Where's Gunner?"

"I'm alone. I—I need a place to stay. Gunner's off with Pop, and I can't stand— The sheep barn burned—Pop left his lantern there. He wouldn't have electricity run on to the barn. Gunner's never home—not even when I want him!" Now I was crying, and she moved out of the doorway.

"Come in. I've heard about your pop and Gunner. You can stay, I reckon. We don't have much, but we share it." She shut the door and waved me into the smoky kitchen.

Mrs. Weston was right. They didn't have much, and I did share it—right down to the bed in which three little girls already slept. Ganner's father was a sullen, quiet man who seldom spoke and sat all day around the kitchen stove, whittling. Mrs. Weston said he was sickly—and they lived on surplus food and welfare money. It was crowded and miserable, with no sign of love or affection shown anyone. I could see right off why Pop's affectionate acceptance of Ganner meant so much to him. Our house must have been like heaven, with its *cozier* and its *love*.

Three days passed. I was sick with longing for Gunner and Mom and with fear about what I would do when the baby came. There wasn't an inch of

That third day, just before sundown, Pop rode into the yard on old Nell and shouted my name. Ma Weston went to the door and told him I didn't want to see him. He threw the reins over Nell's head and came onto the porch.

"Peggy—you in there, come on home and behave yourself!" he shouted through the rickety screen.

"No—" My voice stuck, and it came out a weak, scared squeak.

"She says she won't," Ma Weston folded her big arms over her apron and stood squarely in front of him.

"She'll come, all right! Underage, she is, and the law can bring her!" Pop stuck his chin out and spat the words at Ma Weston.

The law—threaten me with the law? Oh, Pop, Pop, I thought, you really would go that far, wouldn't you? In my mind I saw him bringing the sheriff's and dragging me back up the switch-back, back so he could own my baby as well as Gunner! I could see myself creeping around like Mom, and I knew I wouldn't do it. This place was bad, but I owned my soul here. I'd never go back! All the old hurts, the half-forgotten memories rose up before my eyes, and I pushed by Ma Weston and faced him through the screen door.

"You can't do it, Pop. I don't belong to you. I'm married!"

"Gunner'll come for you—" But there was something about the way he said it that gave me hope—he didn't sound so sure.

"Gunner won't ever come for me. He knows what's wrong. Look, Pop, you've spoiled seventeen years of my life! I had a miserable life, always knowing you didn't want me because I wasn't a boy! Then you picked me a husband!







## Royal Strawberry Pudding

- 2 egg yolks, beaten
- 2 cups hot milk
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cups bread cubes
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup strawberry jam
- 4 egg whites
- 4 tablespoons sugar

Add the sugar, salt, and vanilla to the hot milk. Cool, and add the egg yolks. Put the bread cubes into a buttered casserole, and pour the milk over it. Bake in a moderate, 350-degree oven for 25 minutes. Remove from the oven. Spread the strawberry jam over the pudding. Cover with a meringue made by beating the egg whites to a foam, add the sugar, then beat again until the egg whites stand in peaks. Return to the oven, and bake 20 minutes longer. Serve hot or cold. Serves 6.

## Embassy Apple Mold

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cinnamon flavored candies
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup plus 2 tablespoons water
- 1 3-ounce package apple gelatin
- 1 cup apple sauce
- 1 cup cottage cheese, sieved
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup diced, unpeeled red apple
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup finely diced celery
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whipped cream
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- Salad greens

Boil together the candies and the water, stirring until the candies are dissolved. Take from stove. Stir in the apple-flavored gelatin, keep stirring until dissolved. Blend in the apple sauce and the cottage cheese, chill until syrupy. Stir in the apples, celery, walnuts, and mayonnaise. Into the whipped cream, fold the lemon juice, then fold the whole thing into the gelatin mixture. Pour into a 2-quart mold, and chill until set. Unmold on salad greens and serve. Serves 6.

## California Prune Whip

- 3 egg whites
- Dash of salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon grated lemon rind
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 jars (8 ounces each) junior prunes
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped walnuts
- Sunshine Cream

Beat the egg whites and the salt until foamy. Gradually beat in the sugar, beating constantly until the meringue stands in stiff peaks. Beat in the lemon rind and juice. Fold in the prunes and the chopped walnuts, then pour the mixture into a buttered 2-quart casserole. Place the casserole in a pan filled with water to the depth of one inch, and place in a 350-degree oven. Bake for about 35 minutes. Serve with sweetened whipped cream, or with Sunshine Cream, recipe following.

## Sunshine Cream

- 3 egg yolks
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cups milk
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla

Add the milk and sugar to the egg yolks, beat all together in the top of a double boiler until mixed. Cook over simmering water for approximately 20 minutes, stirring constantly, until slightly thickened. Stir in the vanilla, and serve over the Prune Whip recipe above. Makes 2 cups. Serves 6.

## Lemon Custard Meringues

- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla
- 3 egg whites
- 1 cup sugar

### Meringue cups:

Add the salt, vinegar, and vanilla to the egg whites, and beat to a stiff foam. Gradually add the sugar, and continue beating until very stiff. Spoon the meringues on a cookie sheet covered with plain ungreased paper, then shape them into cups with the back of a big spoon. Bake in a slow, 300-degree oven for 45 minutes. Take from the oven, immediately remove from the paper, and cool. Makes 6 3-inch meringue cups.

### Lemon Custard Filling:

- 1 cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- 5 tablespoons cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cups boiling water
- 3 beaten egg yolks
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 2 tablespoons grated lemon rind

Mix the sugar, salt, and cornstarch. Slowly add the water, and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Add a little of this hot mixture to the beaten egg yolks, lemon juice and rind, and return to the remaining hot mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, until thick—about 10 minutes. Chill, then spoon into the cooled meringue cups.

## Turkish Coffee

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cups water
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 6 tablespoons finely ground coffee

Measure the water, sugar, and coffee into a heavy saucepan, stir over a medium heat until the mixture comes to a boil and is frothy. Remove the saucepan from the heat until the froth subsides. Return to the heat and repeat this process twice more. Before serving, add a few drops of cold water to settle the grounds. Spoon some of the foam into demi-tasse cups, and pour the coffee. Makes 4 demi-tasse servings.

**Coffee Notes:** If pulverized regular coffee is available, you'll find it best for Turkish Coffee, although excellent results are obtained with other grinds. Remember that cream is never used with Turkish Coffee.

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## Crema de Avocado

- 4 ripe avocados
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1/4 cup sugar

Peel and pit the avocados. Mash them with a fork, or put them through a food mill or sieve. Add the lime juice and the sugar, mix thoroughly. Spoon into the freezing tray of your refrigerator. Chill until icy cold but not frozen. Serve in sherbet glasses, top with a mint leaf or two, and accompany the crema with vanilla crackers. Serves 4.

**Variation:** Before chilling the avocado crema, add 1/2 cup of vanilla ice cream, stirring it in until perfectly blended. Or add, instead, 1 teaspoon of crema de cacao.

## Apple-Orange Crisp

- 4 cups sliced, pared tart apples
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/4 teaspoon grated orange rind
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- Dash of allspice
- Dash of salt
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- Vanilla ice cream

Slice the apples into a buttered 9-inch pie plate. Sprinkle with the orange juice and the grated orange rind. Make the topping by combining the sugar, flour, spices, and salt, and drizzling the melted butter into this mixture. Toss with fork or big spoon until you have crumbs. Scatter them over the apples. Bake in a moderate, 375-degree oven for 45 minutes, or until the apples are tender and done, and the topping is crisp and delicately browned. Serve warm, with a big scoop of vanilla ice cream on each portion. Serves 6.

**Note:** Substitute light cream for the ice cream, if you like, or whip heavy cream, sweeten and flavor it with vanilla, and top the pie.

## Bittersweet Tweed Cake

- 1/2 cup butter (1/2 stick)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups sifted cake flour
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup milk, mixed with
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 3 squares bitter baking chocolate
- 2 egg whites
- 1/2 cup sugar
- Frosting and topping

Cream the butter and sugar thoroughly together. Sift the sifted cake flour together with the baking powder and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the creamed mixture alternately with the milk combined with the vanilla, beginning and ending with the dry ones, beating well after each addition. Grate the bitter chocolate, blend into the batter. Fold in the egg whites, beaten with the sugar until stiff but not dry, and pour

the batter into 2 9-inch cake pans, greased and floured. Bake in a moderate, 350-degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes. Cool slightly, turn out of pan onto wire rack, then dribble the Chocolate topping over the top of the cake, letting it drip down the sides of the cake a little.

**Frosting:** Beat together 3/4 cup of softened butter and 3 egg yolks. Blend in 2 1/2 cups of sifted confectioners sugar, beat until smooth. Frost both layers, put them together.

**Chocolate Topping:** Melt a 6-ounce package of semi-sweet chocolate bits in the top part of a double boiler over hot water, add 2 tablespoons of water, stir until smooth. Pour over the top of the cake, on top of the frosting, let run down the sides of the cake. Serves 6 to 10.

## Pecan Macaroons

- 4 egg whites
- 2 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup finely-sifted bread crumbs
- 1 1/2 cups shredded pecans
- 1 teaspoon vanilla or almond extract

Beat the egg whites until stiff but not dry. Gradually add the sugar, beating constantly. Divide the meringue in two parts. To the first part, add the fine sifted bread crumbs and the shredded pecans. To the second half, add the vanilla or the almond extract. Spread the bread-crumbs half on a floured board, about 1/2 inch thick, and cut into cookies with a round cookie cutter. Lay these cookies on a buttered baking sheet, and spread with the reserved meringue almost to the edges of the cookies. Bake in a moderate, 350-degree oven until a very light brown. The yield will depend on the size of your cookie cutter.

## Cola Soda

- 2 tablespoons light cream
- 2 big scoops chocolate ice cream
- Cola

Into each glass, ladle the 2 tablespoons of light cream. Add the scoops of chocolate ice cream. Fill up each glass with ice-cold cola and serve at once.

## Minted Watermelon Delight

- 4 cups watermelon juice
- 2 cups orange juice
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1/2 cup sugar
- Fresh mint sprigs

Combine all the ingredients listed except the mint. Mix well. Pour over ice cubes in your punch bowl and chill until serving time. Then serve and garnish each glass with the fresh mint.

**Watermelon Juice:** To make watermelon juice, cut the watermelon in half, scoop out ripe interior, discard the seeds, cut the pink fruit into cubes. Press these cubes through a sieve. Makes 1 1/2 quarts.

# IF YOU KNOW JUST 20 PEOPLE...



## YOU CAN MAKE AT LEAST \$50<sup>00</sup> -MORE LIKELY \$100<sup>00</sup> to \$200<sup>00</sup> IN YOUR SPARE TIME!



### Get These 2 Assortments on Approval

**YULETIDE CHARM ASS'T.** (top) is a tremendous value! 21 beautiful, sparkling cards showing with mid-fashion Christmas cheer.  
**REGAL LUSTRE ASS'T.** (bottom) 21 magnificent cards on ribbons, lustrous Keweenaw paper, enriched with gold bronzing and sparkling decorations.

### Everyone You Know Needs Christmas Cards and Everyone Loves Wallace Brown Cards

Do you know 20 people? Of course you do! Add up a half-dozen relatives, perhaps 5 neighbors, the butcher, the baker, the milkman, the grocer, your dentist, several friends and other tradespeople—and you've probably got a lot more than 20. So what are you waiting for? These folks alone can bring you in at least \$50.00, probably \$100.00 to \$200.00, extra money in just a few hours spare time. And this is just a start! Most everyone you know needs Christmas Cards, and when you show them the spectacular, nationally famous 1962 Wallace Brown Line of Cards and Gift Items—it's love at first sight. They'll snap up 2, 3, 6 or more Christmas Card Boxes right on the spot. This is the fun way of making money because it's so easy. We send you samples that do the selling for you. And, besides making money, you'll save money on your own personal Christmas Cards, Gifts, Wrappings, etc., at wholesale prices. See for yourself without risking a penny by mailing the coupon below TODAY! You'll be glad you did!

### GET FREE CATALOG TOO—Send Coupon Below

Be first in your neighborhood to cash in on this easy way to extra money with the 1962 Wallace Brown Line of Christmas Cards and Gift Items. Mail coupon this minute! You'll get 2 Christmas Card Assortments on approval, and FREE Samples of Name-Imprinted Personal Christmas Cards. Plus FREE full-color catalog showing lots more money makers, including many Christmas and All-Occasion Greeting Card Assortments, Stationery, Gift Wrappings, Novelty Gifts, Household Items, etc. Everything you need to start making money at once and we show you how. See how much fun making extra money can be. Just mail the coupon shown below—TODAY!

### SEND NO MONEY

Paste Coupon on postcard  
or mail in envelope

WALLACE BROWN, INC.  
11 East 26th St., Dept. E-99  
New York 10, N.Y.

Send 2 Christmas Card Assortments on approval, plus FREE Samples of Name-Imprinted Personal Christmas Cards, FREE full-color Catalog, and details of simple money-making plan.

Name

Address

City & Zone  State

If writing for an organization, give its name

# FREE

Samples of Popular-Priced,

### Name-Imprinted PERSONAL CHRISTMAS CARDS

Thrill your friends and neighbors and make even MORE MONEY for yourself with exquisite, custom-designed NAME-IMPRINTED Christmas Cards at amazingly low prices. A large variety of exclusive, original designs for folks who want the finest quality in Personalized Christmas Cards at prices everybody can afford. They sell just by being shown. It's so easy, too, because...

We ship direct to your customers and we pay postage... You have no bother; no trouble and no wasted time making deliveries. Send coupon for your FREE Samples of the 4 Great New Lines of these fast-selling cards!

**ORGANIZATIONS:** Churches, clubs, veterans' auxiliaries, etc. can now add hundreds of dollars to their treasures with these fast sellers. Give organization name on coupon for Fund-Raising Plan. Mail coupon.

11 East 26th St., Dept. E-99  
New York 10, New York

**WALLACE BROWN, INC.**

# WILL YOU WORK SATURDAY MORNINGS for \$5<sup>00</sup> to \$20<sup>00</sup> EXTRA?

**THIS SPARE TIME SHOE BUSINESS  
CAN MAKE BIG MONEY FOR YOU...**

**DON'T Invest a Cent! We give you a  
FREE SELLING OUTFIT!**

It's just like having an EXTRA payday *every week* . . . just for showing friends, relatives and neighbors how they'll "walk on air" in Mason comfort shoes! Many a man sells 2, 3, 4 or 6 pairs of Mason shoes on Saturday morning alone—and makes himself as much as \$5 to \$20 or more extra for 2 or 3 hours of his time. *You keep all of your profit!* We furnish you a FREE selling outfit containing everything you need to start making money right away. We carry the stock for you and ship the shoes for you—your profit is clear! You never invest a cent. And think what you'll save on your own shoes, too!

## Here's Why You'll Make Money!

You'll take orders for over 230 different shoe styles for dress, sport or work, for men and women—a far greater selection than any neighborhood store can possibly stock. And you can fit almost anyone! You'll draw from our 300,000-pair stock with sizes ranging from 2½ to 15, widths AAAA to EEEE! You'll feature exclusive Velvee-ox shoes with foamy-soft air-cushion innersoles that let you "walk on air." You show many other exclusive features . . . Ripple Sole Shoes, Oil-Resistant Work Shoes, Magic Shu-Lok Shoes, colorful styles for women—a line that's far beyond the reach of any store. That's why **EVERYBODY** is your prospect. And because Mason Shoes are never sold through stores, folks must buy from you!

## Sales Equipment Absolutely FREE

Fill out and mail coupon below. We'll rush you your FREE selling outfit. Kit features 230 fast-selling shoe styles, plus foolproof measuring equipment—and "How To Make Extra Money" booklet. Send no money now or later. You get everything you need to start. Rush coupon for your FREE selling outfit . . . have an EXTRA payday next Saturday! Act today!

**MASON** SHOE MFG. CO.  
Dept. H-576  
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

## RUSH STARTING OUTFIT

MR. NED MASON

Mason Shoe Mfg. Company, Dept. H-576, Chippewa Falls, Wis.

Dear Ned: Please rush FREE and postpaid my Starting Shoe Business Outfit with **EVERYTHING** I need to start making extra each Saturday morning.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE PRINT)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

## Opportunities for District Managers

If you like to sell, can sell, and can train and supervise others, we may have an opening for you as a District Sales Manager.

If you are qualified for this type of position, write us. Give age, education, sales and management experience. Personal interviews without web experience.

Write P. H. Probert, Desk B, Mason Shoe Mfg. Company, Chippewa Falls, Wis.



AT THE AUTO SHOWS...TOP HONORS GO TO  
THE DREGSTER *"the spotlight car"*

\$666



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WITH DUAL ECONOMY OF DREG SCAN  
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